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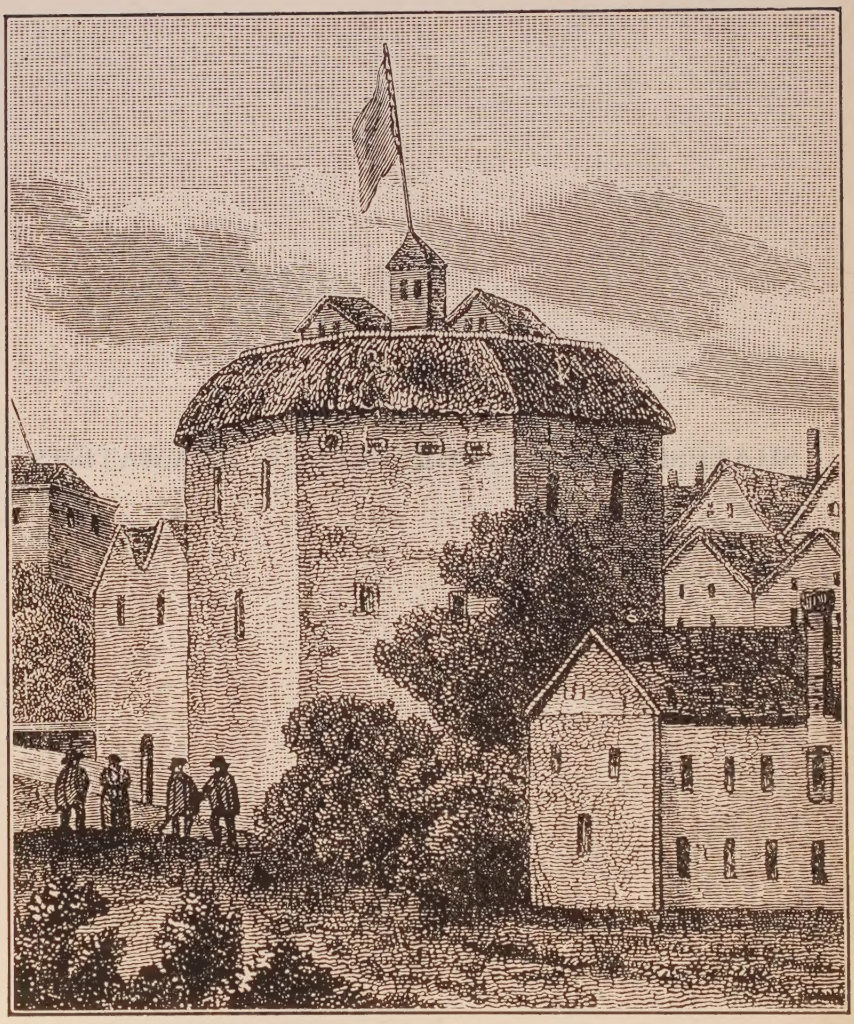
SHAKESPEARE AND HIS FELLOW DRAMATISTS



The Globe Theatre.

SHAKESPEARE
AND HIS FELLOW DRAMATISTS

A SELECTION OF PLAYS ILLUSTRATING THE
GLORIES OF THE GOLDEN AGE OF
ENGLISH DRAMA

EDITED BY

E. H. C. OLIPHANT

SENIOR FELLOW IN ENGLISH, SARAH LAWRENCE COLLEGE

Volume II

YORKSHIRE TRAGEDY—JOVIAL CREW

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TO

SAMUEL A. TANNENBAUM

MOST DYNAMIC OF SHAKESPEAREAN SCHOLARS,
AND ONE OF THE BEST OF FRIENDS

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EXPLANATORY NOTE

Had this work been designed mainly for research students, the earliest text or the best of the early texts would have been followed, with all its imperfections; but, for those who are not research students, such reproduction would be very undesirable, and would help to defeat the aim which the editor has kept steadily in view—that of providing ordinary students with a text which will not be an unnecessary irritation to them. The spelling has therefore been modernized, and obvious errors have been corrected. Where an error is to be presumed, but is not certain, or where the correction of an error is a matter of doubt, a footnote is brought into requisition.

In most of the original texts and in modern editions, the past tense is presented with no consistency. The word "loved," for instance, may be so given or may be printed as "lov'd," with no variation whatever in the pronunciation. Here the full spelling is invariably employed in such cases, the apostrophe being used only where there is a curtailing of the pronunciation, as with "lov'st," instead of "lovest," or where the employment of the "e" might create a doubt as to the pronunciation, as sometimes in "learned." Where our ordinary pronunciation is departed from by the employment of an extra syllable, the diæresis is employed, as, *e.g.,* "lovëd," "ambitiöus," "fiŕe," "doubly." Where the stress is on what is to-day an unaccented syllable, an acute accent is employed, so that the reader may find "péremptory," "cómplete," "revénue."

The modernizing is not confined to the text, but is extended to the stage directions. An attempt has been made to clarify the situation, so as to make the reading easier for the student. In many plays, as ordinarily printed, one may not realize what is doing and may lose something of the force of the presentation through inability to grasp the position. It is hoped that a word or two of explanation at the beginning may save many a reader from being turned from a play in which he would, with the exercise of a little patience at the start, soon find himself greatly interested.

There is also here, to a slight extent, a modernizing of the stage technique. This may be objected to by those who are adherents of the old Elizabethan stage tradition; but, in point of fact, there is no edition of Shakespeare or any other dramatist (save uncritical ones aiming at

actual reproduction) that does not depart from those traditions in a greater or less degree. On the Elizabethan stage the changes of scene were mostly in the imaginations of the audience. When certain characters left the stage, the scene ceased to be a room in the house of one of them; and, when another set of characters came in, it became a room in another house, or perhaps a market-place or a forest or the deck of a ship. When a play of Shakespeare's is given on a modern stage, it is given with the advantage of modern stage appliances; and there can be no doubt that, if they had been available to Shakespeare, he would have used them. When, therefore, modern editors fit plays for modern readers by making careful indication of scenes, they might go a step further by departing from the absurdity of having all the characters march off the stage when a scene ends. If a play by Shakespeare or any other Elizabethan were presented to-day according to the original text (unless it were a performance to illustrate Elizabethan staging), a scene would close with a dropping of the curtain or a darkening of the stage. The absurdity of having a sick man carried out in his bed, in order that the stage might be cleared, would be done away with. It was a necessity of the Elizabethan stage; it is not a necessity to-day. The final "exit" or "exeunt" appears here, therefore, only when the text calls for a clearing of the stage.

And here it may be remarked parenthetically that the division into scenes is made upon the basis of the clearing of the stage in the old editions. To do so is to make for consistency. Modern editors are not at all consistent in this respect: where battles take place, for example, they will have contending forces make three or four different appearances in the course of a single scene, and then, for no apparent reason, suddenly create a new scene by announcing that we are now presented with "another part of the field." Wherever the stage is cleared, the scene is to be regarded as ended, save where it is obvious that the locale is not changed and that there is no great passage of time. That is the principle on which the scene-divisions have been marked throughout this work. Jonson's scene-divisions based on French principles are accordingly ignored, in order that consistency may be attained.

In all modern reconstructions of the Elizabethan stage only three doors are shown. It is possible that there were no more; but there is no certainty. Even if there were, there is no good reason why, when we are assuming curtains for the closing of scenes, we should not also assume as many places of entry and exit as are necessary for a really credible presentation of any play. In "The Alchemist," for instance, five doors are necessary for the student's proper comprehension of the traffic of the play. Five doors are accordingly provided for here in the room that is the scene of the bulk of the comedy. Our students may be more

critical than an Elizabethan audience was; but that is no reason why their criticisms should not be met.

In point of fact, there is very little reason for the generally held idea that the Elizabethan stage had but three places of entrance and exit on the ground floor. There were certainly two side doors and a centre door; but also, when the stage was given its full depth, both wings of the back stage were available, thus making a total of five separate places of entry and exit. If proof be needed, it is afforded by "Antony and Cleopatra," III 9, where two armies pass over the stage in opposite directions, the rear stage obviously being used for the display of the more distant one, while the contrary direction pursued shows a march from left to right in the one case, and from right to left in the other. That requires no less than four side entrances, so that, in allowing for five doors (including the centre one back) in "The Alchemist," no more is being asked of the Elizabethan stage than it was capable of supplying.

Where a word or a letter has been inserted to make sense of what in the early editions is nonsense, square brackets are used. Thus, in IV 1 of "The Traitor," we have "I may safely swear [I] have no hand with your lordship," the second "I" having been (presumably accidentally) omitted from the original text. The square brackets are used also (as in

If thou
Dost love [me] with that tenderness

in V 1 of the same play) to supply a word or words that seem to be metrically necessary; but in this connection they are employed very cautiously and sparingly, usually only with writers whose verse is notably regular and orthodox.

A novel procedure, which, it is believed, will meet with the approval of students and readers generally, and even of instructors, is the printing of asides and whispered speeches or portions of speeches within pointed brackets. The ordinary editorial method is to print the word "aside" at the end of remarks made by a character for the benefit or entertainment of the audience—a mere expression of his thoughts not audible to the other persons on the stage. The student accordingly does not recognize till he has reached the conclusion of these remarks that they are of this nature; and often, when he looks back, he has a difficulty in ascertaining where the aside began. To provide the explanatory word at the beginning, instead of at the end, of the passage is open to much less grave objection, but is still unsatisfactory enough, because the student does not always realize where the aside ends. The novel method adopted here is not open to such misunderstanding. These pointed brackets (<, >) are used also to indicate whisperings. These are ordinarily not indicated at all; and consequently students often fail to understand that observations that are really of this nature are not

heard by all the characters on the stage. In the case of such a whispered conversation, the whole of it is put within one pair of pointed brackets.

Letters, proclamations, or anything else read will be found quoted, instead of being given in italics, as is ordinarily done. Italics are reserved for speeches in strange tongues, for plays or masques within a play, or for the representation of a puppet-show (as in "Bartholomew Fair"). The additions to "The Spanish Tragedy" are also given in italics and are moreover otherwise clearly indicated. Where a rule is found extending perpendicularly along the margin of a scene or portion of a scene, what is so marked may be omitted without the value of the play being prejudicially affected. This may cover scenes of mere foolery having no value in themselves and no bearing on the story, or it may cover an entire sub-plot. This, it is thought, may be useful to both students and instructors, and may add greatly to the appreciation of two or three plays.

In the case of jointly written plays or plays written by one author and rewritten by another, the authorship of each scene is indicated by the appearance at the head of the scene of the initial of the writer believed to be responsible for it. This is not done with any idea of dogmatizing, but because it is thought such an expression of opinion will be helpful to the student. It may, in the case of the Beaumont and Fletcher plays, and in the case of the plays attributed to Middleton and Rowley, enable him to form definite ideas of the respective styles of these various authors.

In the footnotes, "B" means basic text or texts; "Q" stands for quarto; "Qq," for quartos; "F," for folio. These notes give original readings (other than obvious blunders) that have been departed from by the present editor, whether following the lead of previous editors or not. The remaining notes are almost entirely glossarial, it not being deemed advisable to occupy a lot of space with historical information, authorities, parallels, or (except where necessary) translations.

There are a couple of other matters calling for remarks. As usual in text books of Elizabethan drama, every tenth line is numbered; but the numbering is purely mechanical, a verse line that spills over being reckoned as two lines, and stage directions also being counted. This has been deemed advisable because of the size of the type used leading to so many lines being overrun. Instructors will appreciate the novelty of having the numbers in clear type that places no undue strain upon the eyes.

Another departure from general custom is in having the act and scene numbers at the head of a page refer to the line immediately following it. It is peculiarly irritating to see "III 1" at the top of a left-

hand page, and to proceed to search on that page for what one wants, only to find that III 1 starts almost at the bottom of the second column, and that one has been searching through the last scene of II. Why this silly practice is so often followed it is not easy to say. Probably it is an example of the force of tradition and of the conservative instincts of the printer.

NOTES ON THE DRAMATISTS

Cyril Tourneur

Tourneur's right to inclusion here is very doubtful, since the play which constitutes the only pretext for giving a notice of him does not appear to be his. As, however, he is the only writer connected with it by the external evidence, it is thought well to give him the benefit of the doubt.

All that is known of Tourneur may be enclosed within the limits of a walnut-shell. The spelling of his name is invariably given as it is spelt here; but not the same consistency was observed in his own day; and it is to be noted that his poem "The Transformed Metamorphosis" was published as "by Cyril Turner." This poem saw the light in 1600; and its appearance is the first we know of its author. His play "The Atheist's Tragedy" was entered in the Stationers' Register in September, 1611, and published in the same year. Its date of production would seem to have been 1604. In 1611–2 a play of his, entitled "The Nobleman," was acted at Court by the King's men; but this is unfortunately lost. He was still writing in 1613, when he collaborated with Daborne; but in December of that year he went abroad, and his connection with the stage apparently ceased. He died in February, 1625–6.

To deprive Tourneur of the credit for "The Revenger's Tragedy" is to rob him of his chief claim to consideration; yet, even without that, he remains a noteworthy figure; for "The Atheist's Tragedy" is not to be despised. It contains one really fine piece of characterization, that of Sebastian, the chivalrous, fair-minded, honest-hearted libertine; and, though it is always horrible, often grotesque, and sometimes even ridiculous, it has undoubted power and passages of considerable beauty; but, whatever its merits, they are not those of "The Revenger's Tragedy." The verse is not only unlike that of the other play; it is, in principle, diametrically opposed to it. That is what makes it difficult to believe that the two tragedies were the work of the one author. In "The Atheist's Tragedy" we have an extraordinary anticipation of the verse of Shirley a quarter of a century later; in "The Revenger's Tragedy" we are given a verse of exceeding individuality, resembling

that of no one else save Middleton, whose methods of versification are at the other extreme from Shirley's. Nor is there any resemblance in thought or diction or syntactical peculiarities between the two plays. In fact, Mr. H. Dugdale Sykes, who is a hunter of parallels and a believer in the Tourneurian authorship of "The Revenger's Tragedy," was able to adduce but one of any consequence; and that one was, as a matter of fact, a borrowing from Marston. The case against Tourneur is considered at length in "Studies in Philology" (April, 1926), where reasons are given for believing that "The Revenger's Tragedy" is really the work of Middleton. The strongest reason for disbelieving that Tourneur could possibly have written the two plays is the incredibility of the one style having developed into the other. One can understand the employer of a conventional, orthodox, normal style abandoning it deliberately, and adopting instead an entirely individual, original, and heretical style of his own, as in fact Middleton did; but it is not easy to imagine the inventor of such a style as that of "The Atheist's Tragedy" scrapping it, in order to take up another style no less singular or novel or destructive of accepted methods, but quite at the other pole in its prosodic conception. If that be likely, Tourneur may have been the author of the two plays; but, if so, he must have been the most originally creative metrist of all the Elizabethan dramatists. It is much easier to regard the two plays as by two different men. If Tourneur be rejected as the author of "The Revenger's Tragedy," and the claim of Middleton be not granted, there is nothing to be done but to regard this play as the work of some unknown one-play dramatist, since there is no writer of the time whose style approximates to his, save only Middleton.

Tourneur's claim to "The Revenger's Tragedy" rests entirely upon the external evidence; and this is scarcely to be considered conclusive. The quarto issues of the play were anonymous; but in the late 17th century two several cataloguers attributed it to him. It is to be presumed that they had some reason, and were not merely guessing; but what the reason was no one can say. Langbaine did likewise, entering it as "The Loyal Brother, or The Revenger's Tragedy." It is, therefore, likely that he had an edition distinct from either of those that have come down to us. The double title seems also to suggest revision, especially as the alternative name would not be particularly fitting to the play as it stands. Here we may perhaps have a clue to the solution of the problem that confronts us: the play may have undergone revision, either the original author or the reviser, but not both, being Tourneur. There are indeed several signs of revision: the swearing in I 4, to which importance seems to be attached, leads nowhere; the hero's brother has two names; the Hippolito of I 4 is ad-

dressed as "my lord" and does not seem to be identical with the Hippolito who plays so big a part in the play; there is some confusion between the two elder sons of the Duchess, sometimes Ambitioso, and sometimes Supervacuo being the younger of the twain; and, in the final scene, Supervacuo is not accounted for. All this may possibly be the result of carelessness on the part of a single author; but it is much more likely to be the outcome of revision by one writer of the work of another. It is against that theory that it is not easy to perceive the presence of more than one hand. It is, however, possible that Tourneur may have revised the play for a performance later than 1608, making a version in which Hippolito occupied so important a part as to warrant the title, "The Loyal Brother." That would account for the attribution to him of a play in the existing version of which his hand is not to be seen; but it would leave unaccounted-for the tokens of revision in the play as we have it. The puzzle is a very pretty one, of which no satisfactory solution is forthcoming.

Francis Beaumont

The principal member of the most famous partnership in English literary annals was born in 1584 or 1585. He was even more precocious than most of the Elizabethans, his poem "Salmacis" being published anonymously in 1602. He was certainly writing for the stage early in 1607, when "The Woman-hater" was published, and probably much earlier, unless we are to assume that that play saw the light immediately after production, which is improbable. It contains within itself evidence that would indicate a date of production of 1605–6; but it may in its first form have been even earlier. It seems quite likely, in fact, that Beaumont's beginnings as a writer for the theatre may date 1604, or thereabouts. He differed from the other writers of plays in that he remained more or less of an amateur, not being under the same pecuniary compulsion as most of his fellow-dramatists, including Fletcher. He came of a good family, and his attitude in his plays is always that of the aristocrat. In his prologues and epilogues he is fond of expressing contempt for the popular judgment, which was something the average professional playwright did not venture to do.

We do not know when the famous partnership with Fletcher began, nor do we know definitely when it ended. It was in full swing in 1609 (if "Philaster" may be attributed to that year), and may have had its origin in or about 1606. It is believed that Beaumont's connection with the stage ended in 1613, when he married; but that is by no means certain, for he seems to have been at work on "The Scornful

Lady" in 1615. However, he assuredly did not do much after his marriage, since he died March 6, 1615–6.

There is no more fascinating task in all literature than that of endeavoring to sort out the various authors of the plays published under the joint names of Beaumont and Fletcher. No attempt will be made here to do so; those who are interested may be referred to the editor's work, "The Plays of Beaumont and Fletcher," where not only his own views are given, but also those of other investigators, and where the essential differences between the literary and prosodic characteristics of Beaumont and those of Fletcher are dealt with at length. It must suffice to devote a few words here to what constitutes the greatness of Beaumont.

First, let us notice his extraordinary simplicity of diction. One may find in his work line after line composed wholly of monosyllables, and it can easily be understood how admirably this delightful simplicity lends itself to the expression of that pathos of which he was so consummate a master. He had an unequalled ability to understand the soul of innocent maidenhood and to present it to us in all its charm. His comedy had the grossness of his time; but he never allowed it to intrude upon his pictures of pure and chaste love. Often his sentiment runs to absurdity; but, when he is at his best, he has an unsurpassed power of portraying the pathetic. In tragic force he does not fall far behind the greatest masters; in comedy he ranks with the highest; and, finally, he is the unequalled master of the burlesque vein, which he seems to have been the first to exploit.

Beaumont and Fletcher effected a great theatrical revolution: they supplanted the inevitability of the older drama by the element of surprise. They aim at interesting by a succession of striking situations, of the outcome of which the reader or the spectator cannot be sure. Most of their serious drama is of the sentimental, romantic order. But, though the stories lack the verity of earlier plays, though they seem artificial and mechanical in conception, the language is of such a directness and such a clarity as almost to convince us of the reality of what is presented to us. They give us little of the old declamatory eloquence, in which action is halted while poetry takes possession of the scene. They eschew poetry that is not dramatic. That is, on the whole, a change for the better; but it is not for the better that some, at least, of their plays are destitute of ethical intention, except in two respects, the upholding of a romantic magnanimity and the stressing of the necessity of loyalty to the crown at all costs. This defect must not, however, be over-stressed. Beaumont, at least, had the merits as well as the faults of his class.

There are three difficulties in the way of our obtaining a clear per-

spective of the style of Beaumont: first, no play apparently exists in which is to be found the hand of no one but himself; secondly, the only two plays which are so overwhelmingly his that they might be taken as affording clear evidence of his literary manner are, in some measure at least, spoiled for the purpose by the fact that both are built up on burlesque lines; thirdly, Beaumont died before he had achieved a definite and unmistakable style of his own.

Besides the three Beaumont plays taken here, the student anxious to become better acquainted with him may study "A King and no King" as a fine example of his tragi-comedy faculty and "The Noble Gentleman" and "The Scornful Lady" as displaying his gift in comedy. His part in "The Captain" is too subordinate and "Wit at several Weapons" has been too heavily overwritten to warrant the recommendation of them for the purpose, despite their merits. "Love's Pilgrimage" as a romantic comedy, and "Thierry and Theodoret" as a tragedy, would certainly have to be borne in mind in this connection, if we could be absolutely certain of Beaumont's presence; but to obtain a correct idea of his manner it is undesirable to consider plays of which we cannot be quite sure; and these two are amongst the number. The three plays taken here do, however, illustrate well his gifts in three several fields—burlesque, romantic tragi-comedy, and tragedy.

John Fletcher

Beaumont's friend and partner was born in 1579, and was therefore five or six years the older of the twain. It is likely therefore that, though he was the junior member of the firm, as we know not merely from tradition but from a study of the joint plays, he was the earlier of the two to enter on a theatrical career. D'avenant, who ought to have known, says that he "wore the bays" "full twenty years." As he died in 1625, that would serve to date his beginnings to 1605 or earlier. If we interpret it as meaning "more than twenty years," as it would seem to do, it may be taken to imply that he was writing for the stage in 1603 or 1604. Why not? Almost all of the playwrights of his time began young, and, if Fletcher did not make a commencement till he was 26, he was much less precocious than the majority of them. On the contrary, a man of his type was likely to be more, not less, precocious than his fellows, and therefore it seems reasonable to surmise that he began his career about 1602, when he was 23 years old. There is, in fact, strong reason for regarding the first version of his "Women Pleased" as having been produced in 1603. (See Oliphant: "The Plays of Beaumont and Fletcher.") After Beaumont's death, Fletcher went on writing, sometimes with Massinger, sometimes alone, till October,

1624, at least, and probably till his death from the plague in August, 1625.

Fletcher was the creator of the most original verse practised by any Elizabethan dramatist—a verse so original as to stand out clearly from the verse of all his rivals. It is characterized by an excessive use of double endings (commonly about 70 per cent); a habit of emphasizing the eleventh syllable of a pentametrical line, thus giving the line really a sixth foot, this extra foot being, however, only of a single syllable; a further habit of following this extra emphatic syllable with a light one (the word "lady", as a form of address, thus being added to a line complete without it); a fondness for tri-syllabic feet and slurred syllables; and a disinclination to employ run-on lines or weak endings, some ninety per cent of his lines being end-stopped. There is only one other dramatist who has this extraordinary combination of the feminine ending with the end-stopped line. That is Middleton, who is, as an original metrist, his only rival among all the successors of Marlowe. Both of them aimed at making their verse dialogue read as easily and as naturally as prose, and each achieved a quite remarkable degree of success. It is noteworthy that, while the other dramatists of the time, including Shakespeare, sought to attain freedom and a measure of naturalness by the abandonment of the end-stopped line, Fletcher and Middleton sought the same end by a diametrically contrary route; and, inferior as their verse may be to the verse of Shakespeare and others, they do arrive more nearly at their destination, the vivacity of their dialogue being oftentimes incomparably near to the real thing.

What irritates one most with Fletcher is the mannered construction of his sentences. His idea of getting force is to say over three or four times what he has to say, qualified each time by a different adjective or adverb. Often this borders closely on the grotesque. And, unfortunately, Fletcher too often tries in this way to achieve grandeur or passion or pathos, with the result that, seeing how the thing is being done, we are not moved, save to resentment of his methods. And yet, on occasions, Fletcher, the most lyrical of all the dramatists, could touch a note of what seems like genuine pathos; but one cannot help being distrustful even when he seems most earnest. It is the price that a too clever conjurer has to pay.

It is in comedy that he shines. His humor is undeniable; he is one of the few Elizabethans (Beaumont is another) who can move us to hearty laughter. He has a real comic inventiveness, and he sets it forth in a dialogue the wit, the vivacity, and the clarity of which are unsurpassable. His imagination of the ludicrous is remarkable, and he clothes it in language that is irresistibly mirth-provoking. His plays are the most bustling and lively of the time, matched only by Middle-

ton's town comedies; but they do not rank as high as many by men of much less genius. They lack compactness; they consist of a series of very amusing incidents, a succession of climaxes. Of characterization there is very little: he presents us with types rather than individuals; his men are generally libertines; his chaste women are capable of the greatest coarseness of expression; and character is subordinated to action throughout.

Of the plays that Fletcher wrote alone after the death of Beaumont, the most noteworthy are "The Humorous Lieutenant," "The Island Princess," and "Rule a Wife," which is usually considered his best comedy. Another notable play in which he had no help is that fine tragedy, "Valentinian," which fails somewhat at the finish, but which, for all its faults, remains a noble piece of dramatic eloquence. Fletcher, too, bore ably his part in two other fine tragedies, "The Bloody Brother" and "Barnevelt," and is seen to great advantage in two plays—"Henry VIII" and "The Two Noble Kinsmen"—in which he seems to have collaborated with Shakespeare. It is to be noted that, when he was collaborating with the greatest master of them all, his exuberances and excesses are found to be pruned and restrained to an extent beyond that obtaining in any of his other plays. We might have had greater work from Fletcher than we have, could he always have had the benefit of Shakespeare's restraining hand.

John Webster

Of all the Elizabethan dramatists, it is, next to Shakespeare, Webster who has received the most whole-hearted praise from the most competent critics: Lamb, Coleridge, Hazlitt, Hunt, Swinburne have all spoken of his genius rapturously. Yet one of those fools who rush in where academic angels fear to tread may well feel that, much as he may reverence those names, there is no other Elizabethan (unless we make the usual reservation in favor of Shakespeare) of whom the praise has been so little discriminating. His melodramatic traits have been stressed, to the neglect of his really fine qualities; much attention is directed to the fact that many of his metaphors and aphorisms seem to have been bred on the dunghill or in the hospital, and but little heed is paid to his genuine moral grandeur. He is far more than a melodramatist; he is a master psychologist, the creator of one of the loveliest and sweetest characters in the whole range of English literature, the possessor of a most nervous and pregnant literary style, and the master of a power of flashing and biting repartee that was beyond the ability of any other dramatist of his time.

His output, as we know it, was not large; we have but three plays

that seem to be wholly his, and one of those three, a tragi-comedy, is of no account. Of his joint work, it is only "Appius and Virginia" that is of sufficient excellence to demand mention here. It was published as wholly his; but that there is another hand in it is obvious, and the indications point to the probability that that other hand is the hand of Heywood. That Webster's genius shines much more brightly when he is working alone than when he is collaborating is only what might be expected. What *is* unexpected, in view of the biting quality of his dialogue and of his flashlight revelations of the characters of the persons of his plays, is to discover that he was a slow, painstaking, and business-like worker. If we knew nothing of his methods, we might well suppose that he wrote in a white heat of fury and nervous exaltation; on the contrary, he worked with a note-book. Some of the striking phrases which have compelled the admiration of the greatest critics and of all readers of discernment are taken from Sidney or from Overbury; but never did any literary thief better justify his plagiarism. His artistic instinct appears to have been almost infallible: he alters a single word, perhaps, and gives an ordinary phrase unforgettable beauty. And yet the wonder is that he could achieve such a result in such a way. The prose of the "Arcadia" becomes very beautiful at the touch of this alchemist; but, if many of the gems of wisdom scattered throughout his work are merely versifications of Sidney's prose maxims, there are others for which there is no need to deny Webster the credit.

The fact must never be overlooked that Webster was above all a moralist. Like all moralists, he lets his thoughts dwell on that of which he disapproves. So we have his metaphors drawn from graves and diseases, ordure and corruption; but he never applauds evil, never sows the seed of sin, never arouses base thoughts in the minds of the pruriently-inclined. Constantly his utterance is tinged by the morbidity of his thought, with the result that we get from him gnomic sayings and striking similes such as are not to be found in any other dramatist. Life is to him an ague, and its pleasures only the brief intervals between attacks; but the unpleasantness of this attitude must not blind one to the fact that he combines in his own person both the wisdom of the philosopher and the imagination of the poet.

Even his humor—and he had a good deal, though he proved himself too good an artist to introduce into his two great tragedies any comic relief—is apt to be grim and savage and gruesome, and its quality is always mordant. His repartee is of the same quality. The thrust and the counter-thrust of his verbal exchanges are not, like Lyly's and like Shakespeare's, wit content with itself; they do not exist for their mere verbal cleverness, and, consequently, they never become boresome,

as mere verbal cleverness is so apt to do, and as so many of Shakespeare's verbal exchanges do become. These have a bite and a tang in them: they hurt, and they are meant to hurt. Often they are informed by a savage humor that makes the reader chuckle; always they give the dialogue a wonderful vitality. It is not mere literature: it pulses with life.

The same character is shown in his descriptions of his play-people. This habit is, of course, a dramatic fault; but Webster almost reconciles us to it, because of the terseness and pointedness and the caustic humor that these descriptions exhibit. Another bad habit is that of illustrating his meaning anecdotally; he is almost as fond of parable as if he were endeavoring to establish a religion; and very often the parable is introduced inartistically, undramatically, inappropriately. "Sad tales befit my woe: I'll tell you one," says the Duchess of Malfi, when obviously, in her circumstances, she would have done nothing of the sort. One may notice how frequently he begins some bitter commentary with the words "I have known," or "I have seen," or "I'll tell you."

In purely literary technique Webster ranks among the best of the Elizabethans. The crispness, the nervous force, the essential vitality of his verse give him a distinguished place. He is not one of the formal versifiers—at least, not always. His verse is often loose, with now and then more than the regular number of syllables crowded into the line, and with the not infrequent shortage of a foot.

One of the few facts known about Webster is that he was born free of the Merchant Taylors' Company. He may have been, as Sir Edmund Chambers thinks, the John Webster who was one of Browne's company of English actors in Germany in 1596; but the language he employs in the epilogue to "The White Devil" has been taken to show that he was not an actor. (The words are, however, not explicit enough for anything definite to be built upon them.) Mr. F. L. Lucas, Webster's latest editor, wishes to identify the dramatist with the John Webster who was admitted to the Middle Temple, August 15, 1598. His knowledge of law and fondness for trial scenes make this identification not improbable. The first mention we have of him as a writer for the stage is in May, 1602, when he was collaborating with Mundy, Middleton, and Drayton for Henslowe. That may possibly have been his first work for the theatre. He was certainly still writing in 1624, when he collaborated with Ford; and one may trace his hand a year or two later. In Heywood's "Hierarchy of the Angels," 1634, he is spoken of in the past; but, though it seems probable, it cannot be stated positively that Heywood meant to imply that he was dead. Professor Sisson ("Library," September, 1927) shows reason for believing that he was the John Webster who was buried on March 3, 1637–8.

Thomas Middleton

Swinburne is the only critic of note who has fully realized the greatness of Middleton. His tragic gift is admitted more or less grudgingly; but his power as a writer of comedy is almost invariably underrated. His versatility is extraordinary: dramatic allegory, comedy of intrigue, Fletcherian comedy, the comedy of manners, romantic comedy, tragicomedy, historical tragedy, romantic tragedy: he tried all of these and failed in none of them. There is no other Elizabethan dramatist who attained so high a level in so many branches of his art as did Middleton; but it was in the comedy of manners and the romantic tragedy that he particularly excelled. For some reason, "A trick to catch the Old One" seems to be accepted as his masterpiece in the lighter vein; but it is in that realistic drollery, "Michaelmas Term," that quaint study of certain phases of London life, "Your Five Gallants," and that most mirth-provoking piece of farcical impropriety, "A Chaste Maid in Cheapside," that his comic spirit is seen at its best. His tragic genius is seen not only in the two masterpieces taken here, but, in a less degree, in "Second Maiden's Tragedy," which is plainly his on the internal evidence.

Too many of the comedies of manners of the time are amorphous productions, depending entirely upon the characterization or caricature of the people held up to ridicule. The best of Middleton's are distinguished from them by being cleverly constructed. But their merit is not only that of ingenious and humorous invention: they are notable also for their infectious vivacity, their easy manner, some admirable satire, no little wit, and keen observation. They give us a faithful and entertaining picture of the life of the time, and are generally retentive of one's interest. Their morals are not, perhaps, all that might be desired. The chief comic character emerging from these plays is undoubtedly Sir Bounteous Progress, in "A Mad World," a delightful presentment of a profuse old profligate in a play that is spoiled by the introduction of a real live succubus, as well as by a peculiarly unpleasant matrimonial conclusion. The comedies of manners are mainly in prose, whereas the comedies of intrigue and romantic adventure are in verse, with capital dialogue, an excellent style, and a profuseness of incident.

Middleton's verse is almost as distinct as Fletcher's, and vies with it in its marked deviation from the normal. His use of double endings is not quite so extreme as that of Fletcher; but he far exceeds that writer in the employment of triple and quadruple endings; in fact, in this respect there is no other writer who even approaches him. The deliberateness of his adoption of this peculiarity is shown by his using

for the purpose such words as "gentlemen," "gentlewoman;" and, like Fletcher, he frequently adds to an otherwise complete line a trochaic address-word, such as "madam," to make a triple ending, thus very markedly affecting the lilt of the verse. He also uses the Fletcherian extra emphatic syllable, and not infrequently swells the length of his line by the introduction of anapæsts and slurred syllables. He eschews the weak ending almost entirely, and remains wedded to the end-stopped line; but, owing to his free use of central pauses, his verse has remarkable fluidity. He is, in short, one of the most original of all the versifiers of the period. Among his tricks of construction may be mentioned his penchant for making subordinate what would naturally be the principal clause of a sentence, as in

> Will make the rest show nothing, 'tis so glorious ("No Wit," IV 1),

where the natural construction would be: "'Tis so glorious that it will make the rest show nothing."

The date of Middleton's birth is unknown. It is usually set down at about 1570. (For some reason unknown, whenever scholars are entirely ignorant of the date of birth of anyone whose literary career may be held to have begun in the 'nineties, they set it down at "about 1570.") He was the son of a Londoner, and probably was born in the capital. He may have been identical with the Thomas Middleton admitted a member of Gray's Inn in 1593, though another of the name was admitted in 1596. To identify him with either of these will help to account for his fondness for legal allusions. He made his début in print as a poet in 1597, a fact which, in view of the precocity of Elizabethan poets and dramatists, helps to render improbable his birth at so early a date as that usually allotted to him.

Almost all dramatic historians assume that he began writing for the stage in 1602, because in May of that year his name occurs for the first time in Henslowe's Diary, where he is shown to have been collaborating with Mundy, Drayton, and Webster. That he should have delayed five years after beginning his career as a poet before entering on dramatic authorship is improbable. There is, in fact, reason to believe that his dramatic career began as early as 1596. In an extant MS, his "Mayor of Quinborough" is called alternatively "Hengist, King of Kent." The play is vouched for by its publisher as its author's "first flight," wherefore, if that statement be true, we should expect it to date from about 1597. We find, in fact, that in June of that year an old play styled in the Diary "Henges" was revived by the Admiral's men at the Rose. It was suggested by Fleay that this was the "Valtiger" acted by the same company the previous December, and that suggestion seems very probable. If so, Middleton began playwrit-

ing not later than 1596. It is, however, to be remarked that the style of "The Mayor of Quinborough" points in places to a later date, indicating that the play has undergone revision. Middleton was still writing in 1624, and there is no reason to believe that he had ceased work before 1627, when he died.

It is to be noted that the early work of Middleton shows exceedingly little of the very marked characteristics of his later work. The fact serves to show that his later manner was one of deliberate adoption. He abandoned the orthodox style of verse, in order that he might attain a naturalness that he could not find in it. His unorthodox principles justified themselves: for verse can scarcely offer us anything more natural than his dialogue. Not only is it free from the curse of the rhetorical, but also it comes much closer to real conversation than does the more poetically imagined speech of Shakespeare.

And, finally, let it be remarked that there is no one among the other Elizabethan dramatists, save only Shakespeare, who can use words in so masterly a way as can Middleton. They are his tools, not his tyrants. But Middleton is not merely a great literary technician; he is also a master of the art of playmaking, a creative dramatist, and a fine psychologist.

William Rowley

Attempts have been made of recent years to give to Rowley a great deal of the credit for the great plays he wrote in conjunction with Middleton. It is not claimed that he wrote the finest passages; but it is conjectured that he exercised a strong moral influence. That may be; but it would not justify one in classing Rowley as a great dramatist. If Shelley or Keats wrote his finest poetry under the influence or by the inspiration of others, is it to be regarded as any the less his? Nor is it enough to point out that Middleton, working alone, did nothing so tragically true as the finest scenes in "The Changeling" or so full of the expression of an extremely poetic sensitiveness as certain passages of "The Fair Quarrel." In the absence of anything analogous in Rowley's unaided work, the utmost we can say is that that strangely uneven writer seems to have had the ability to draw out Middleton's best. If he did that, we have reason to be profoundly grateful to him.

Rowley began writing for the stage not later than 1607, when a play partly by him was given to the press. This play certainly goes back, in part at least, to the reign of Elizabeth, so that it is not unreasonable to date Rowley's beginnings prior to 1603. As the passage in "The Old Law" which is supposed to date that play 1599 seems to be by him, he may possibly have begun writing in the sixteenth century; but it may

be well to adopt a conservative attitude, and date him from about 1602, though the chances are that he began earlier. The date of his birth is conjectured at 1585; but there is no reason why it should not be guessed at 1580 or earlier. He was certainly still writing for the stage in 1624; and Professor Sisson has shown ("Library," September, 1927) that he died in February, 1625–6.

Rowley's sole claim to consideration is on account of the plays he wrote in conjunction with Middleton. The work which goes, rightly or wrongly, under his name alone is small in bulk and slight in value. The text of all four of his plays is shockingly corrupt, and three of them seem to have undergone alteration; but, when all possible allowances have been made, it has to be admitted that Rowley's verse is exceedingly rough and unmusical. Swinburne was of opinion that his irregularity was deliberate, the intention being to gain naturalness; but it seems much more probable that it was the outcome of a defective ear. The one real argument that may be brought against this view is that the verse is excessively variable, great differences existing between the verse in any one play and the verse in any other.

His tragedy, "All's Lost by Lust," has been highly praised, but is a poor production. Swinburne declared Rowley's genius to be rather a tragic than a comic one; but the more usual view, that he is to be looked upon mainly as a writer of comedy, seems preferable, for his almost complete lack of a verse gift is against his being rated high in tragedy. Even in comedy he does not impress one very favorably. His sense of humor runs largely to punning and is frankly coarse. Stork, who edited two of Rowley's plays, is enthusiastic about his clowns; but it is hard to share his enthusiasm. There is a rather amusing quality of whimsicality in them; but not much more. Like Heywood's, his language, though simple as a rule, is vitiated by a tendency to Latinisms of his own invention. However defective his verse, his prose is usually strong and nervous. He indulges little in rhetoric, being usually intent on making his point as clearly and directly as possible. He has not much power of characterization, and but little ability to look beneath the surface. Sharing the simple morality of Heywood and Dekker, he is perhaps more of a gentleman than Fletcher and Middleton, because he knew less of the ways of gentlemen. In collaboration he usually has the broad comedy or farce. He is, on the whole, of all the Elizabethan playwrights, the one who least deserves his reputation.

Philip Massinger

Philip Massinger seems, if we may trust to internal evidence, to have had approximately as big a part in the writing of the "Beaumont and

Fletcher" plays as Beaumont had. After the latter's retirement, he was Fletcher's principal partner. He was born in November, 1583, at Salisbury, entered Oxford in 1602, and left the University in 1606 without a degree. We do not hear of him as a writer for the stage till 1613 or 1614, when he was collaborating with Fletcher, Field, and Daborne for Henslowe. To be working with those men, he must have had a good deal of experience and some reputation. He cannot have entered upon his theatrical career before 1606, but he probably did so soon afterwards. Wood tells us that at Oxford he "applied his mind more to poetry and romances than to logic and philosophy." A youth with such inclinations would almost to a certainty proceed direct to London on quitting the University and begin writing for the stage soon after he got there. There is not the slightest reason for supposing that he differed from his fellows in not taking up dramatic work till he was 30 years of age. He died in harness in March, 1639–40, and was buried in the same grave as Fletcher.

Massinger does not arouse enthusiasm, as do Marlowe and Shakespeare, Jonson and Middleton, Webster and Beaumont. He is not capable of their poetry: he gives us eloquence instead. He has no passion; only vehemence. He has no humor, and unfortunately does not seem to know that he has none. He is without variety, his comedy and his tragedy being both sung to the one tune. His characters speak to us from the lips outward, seldom or never from the soul: none of them has any real individuality to express. In short, he was not, like his greater fellows, a genius, but merely a good workman, who knew thoroughly well how to construct a good play. His dialogue is of the most rhetorical, the sentences unnaturally long and carefully rounded. It therefore has no approximation to the conversation of human beings. That is one of the reasons why it has no power to move us. His verse is regular, but is rendered very prosaic by his fondness for improper run-on lines ending with words such as "of," "in," "to," and "my." He employs a heavy percentage of double endings; and a distinctive feature of his verse is his unwillingness to end his speeches with the line. One acquainted with his work may look with confidence for certain famed rhetorical phrases in scenes supposed to demand them.

Massinger has some curious tricks illustrating the mechanical nature of his art. His characters are allowed to describe what is happening on the stage, and even what is being done to themselves. Often these passages descriptive of occurrences are divided between two speakers, the second completing and rounding off the remark of the first, as would never be done in real life. His finest dramatic quality is his constructive faculty. No one knows better than he how to open a play; but his lack of passion prevents him from doing effective work

when his climax is reached. Then we see only the orator and debater, when we need the man and the dramatist.

Massinger always has a moral to point—a fact which does not prevent him from being disgustingly gross at times. This is, however, in his comic scenes; in his serious scenes he is always dignified, always upholding virtue and making vice ridiculous or odious. The innate foulness of his mind—the grossness natural to the active moralist—is shown in the fact that his women are so fond of talking about the "lawful pleasures" of the married state. They look on marriage, in fact, as a sort of legalized adultery. Massinger's women are, then, scarcely the superiors of Fletcher's (to whom chastity is a toy to be played with), since, though less coarse, they are more sensual. It may be noted too how often his good characters praise themselves extravagantly, and how usual it is for his wicked people to make their final exit with a moral reflection.

There are no two opinions as to what constitutes his finest play. The others most warmly praised are "The Roman Actor," said to have been his own favorite, "The Maid of Honour," "The Great Duke," "The City Madam," and "Believe as you list;" but it is only the last-named and "The Unnatural Combat" that are of real excellence. Among plays in which he collaborated with others, "Barnavelt," "The Bloody Brother," and "Thierry and Theodoret" are of outstanding merit. These are all found in the "Beaumont and Fletcher" collection.

James Shirley

The last of the great writers for the public theatre of the great era—the latest to come on the scene, and the only one to survive into the Restoration—was born in London in 1596. Like so many of the dramatists, he was a Cambridge man. He was for a time a schoolmaster at St. Albans; but he soon came to London to try his fortune as a writer of plays. His first play was licensed in February, 1624–5. For a considerable period he was the most noteworthy of the dramatists; but the closing of the theatres took away his means of livelihood, and his later years were spent in poverty. He is said to have resumed playwriting after the Restoration, though none of his later work is extant. He was probably no longer capable of doing good work; and, in any case, tastes had changed. He died in 1666.

He is considered equally noteworthy in tragedy, tragi-comedy, and comedy—whether the comedy of manners or the comedy of intrigue. If we except his one really great play, the general level of his attainment is indeed fairly even; but to set "The Lady of Pleasure," which is sometimes lauded as his best comedy, beside "The Traitor," is merely to

expose its weaknesses. "Hyde Park" is his best effort in realistic comedy; "The Bird in a Cage," if slight, is attractive, and "The Royal Master" is his most noteworthy tragi-comedy. Next to "The Traitor," his most distinguished tragedy is "The Cardinal," which is excellently well worked out and culminates in a scene of great power, but yet lacks distinction and fails to move the reader, perhaps because it is not easy to become interested in the characters. Of higher grade than any of these, because more nearly attaining its aim, is "The Opportunity," which displays a mastery of the comedy of intrigue. But for "The Traitor," Shirley would not rank very high; had he had two plays of that quality, he would occupy a much loftier position in the hierarchy of the drama.

Shirley is always endeavoring to echo the tones of the great Elizabethans. He would be more attractive were he content to be a dramatist, and not seek to vie in poetry with men of far higher powers than his own. He was a dramatist rather than a dramatic poet; and it is a pity that he did not recognize the fact. His work is better than the work of the early men—Lyly, Kyd, Peele, and Greene—but he could never have done what they did. He lacks the incisive power of Marston, the rough heartiness of Rowley, the charm of Drayton, the homely pathos of Heywood, the bluff vigor of Porter, the humor of Brome; but he had a gift of play-composition that pertained to none of them. Yet admiration of his ability in this branch of his art is apt to be swallowed up in resentment of the persistence with which he decks out his poverty of thought in gaudy robes that suited the soaring ideas of the true Elizabethans, but are woefully out of place on his petty fancies, and by distaste for the weakness of his verse, which is often just prose cut up into lengths. Like Molière's "Bourgeois Gentilhomme," he spoke prose without knowing it. At its worst, the verse of Shirley is pitiful; at its best, it is graceful, but undistinguished.

His plots are generally original on well-worn lines, but well worked out. His situations are ingenious, but scarcely novel. His plays present us with no new types of characters; but the persons of his dramas, stereotyped as they are, are frequently well and clearly drawn. His knowledge of stage effect is almost unfailing; but no amount of such knowledge can atone for a failure to be true to life. To read many of his plays in succession is to be wearied by their monotony of incident and of character type. As his best tragedies are better than his best comedies, so his worst comedies are worse than his worst tragedies. He sometimes offends on moral grounds, not so much by immorality as by false morality. If he were content to allow his characters to be amoral, it would be all right; to put moral tags and a sham repentance into the mouths of the unworthy is to offend one's sense of decency.

John Ford

The author of "'Tis Pity she's a Whore" (to name his most characteristic, though not his best, play) is one of the most interesting of the old dramatists, not the less so because such divergent views of his merits are entertained. To some he makes but little appeal; to others he is almost the most attractive of all Shakespeare's rivals; and this difference in the estimation of him is not because those who admire are judging him by his great qualities, while those who dislike him are judging by his defects. It may be said, rather, that it is the one set of qualities by which his place is estimated; but these are regarded by some as meritorious, and by others as quite the reverse. These qualities are distinctly modern; and, whatever else may be said for or against him, Ford must be conceded to be the most modern of all the dramatists of his time.

In many ways this strange phenomenon followed along the old well-beaten tracks; but his soul was his own and marked him out from all who had preceded him. He is the first English writer of problem plays; and his attitude towards the creatures of his imagination is entirely modern; he has a deep sympathy with those who yield to temptation, regarding them not as criminals, but as victims of circumstance. The conventional laws of morality had never been questioned by any of his predecessors, whereas Ford was morally a sceptic. It is this mental attitude that makes him unique; it is this too that serves to make him the least healthy of all the dramatists of his time. There were others who may fairly be charged with a love of the disgusting and the horrible; but that love is a manifestation of hate: they wallow in filth because they are moralists. Ford, on the contrary, is nothing of a moralist: his sympathy is for the vicious; he is an apologist for sin, an advocate for the sinner. He lets the wrongdoer suffer, in accordance with the best traditions of the drama; but one feels that he would prefer to allow him to emerge triumphant. That is where he differs from the two other first-rate psychologists of "the eternal feminine," Webster and Middleton: he was neither moral, like the one, nor non-moral, like the other: he was immoral.

Ford's underplots are almost invariably disgusting; and he is, of all the great Elizabethans, the one most notably lacking in a sense of humor. His attempts at comedy are pitiable. In the construction of his plays he is careless and not particularly competent. It is by his mastery of the tragic and the pathetic that he has his lofty place in the history of English drama. He has something of the Websterian art of illuminating by flashes which penetrate into the secret places of the soul, revealing the most unexpected things. His intensity is at times

almost terrifying, his lines pulsating with the passion of the speaker. In scenes of sheer tenderness he is not less effective. There can be selected from his work single lines of plaintive and tender sadness that are unexcelled in the whole range of Elizabethan drama.

His undoubted masterpiece is the play taken here. Those who wish to make further acquaintance with him may be recommended to turn to "Perkin Warbeck," one of the best historical dramas of the age. Some excellent work of his is to be found also in "The Witch of Edmonton;" but he is only one of its three authors, and the play as a whole is not to be rated so highly as to be singled out for special mention. Another play in which he was but a part author, but which is worthy of general commendation, is "The Spanish Gipsy," published as the work of Middleton and Rowley; but which Mr. H. Dugdale Sykes has shown good reason to regard as largely the work of Ford. It certainly seems in the main to be from the workshop of Ford and Dekker; but there are also a few uncertain signs of Middleton. It is a warmer play than "Perkin Warbeck," which leaves one somewhat cold, the reason being, perhaps, the very feature which constitutes the unique merit of the drama, the mystery in which it is steeped. Never once from start to finish does Ford give any indication whether or not Perkin is an impostor. The attitude affords another example of the modernity of Ford's mentality: one cannot fancy any other Elizabethan dramatist leaving one in any doubt whatever. Perhaps it is because the reader does not know whether to sympathize with the hero or not that the play fails to stir one as it should.

Ford is usually regarded as having arrived on the theatrical scene as late as 1621. Such a conclusion is in accord with the habits of theatrical historians; but in this case it is more than usually absurd. Ford was born in Devonshire in 1585–6. If he did not begin writing for the stage till he was 35 or 36, he was by far the slowest of all the Elizabethan dramatists in ascertaining his vocation. There is certainly nothing in his work to indicate that he was likely to be the least precocious of them all; and indeed we know he was not, since in 1606—that is to say, when he was but twenty years of age—he published a poem. It is not likely to have been long after that that he began writing for the stage. There is evidence of that too; for a lost play, "An Ill Beginning has a Good End," entered in the Stationers' Register in 1660 as Ford's, may, without any straining of the probabilities, be identified with the "Bad Beginning has a Good Ending" acted by the King's men at Court in 1612–3. The historians are so wedded to their irrational view that Ford began his dramatic career in 1621 that they seek to account for this by suggesting that the play entered in the Stationers' Register was a late rewriting by Ford of the old play of

1612. Is it not much more reasonable to assume that Ford was writing for the stage in that year? As to what he did between then and 1621, he is far from being the only dramatist of whose doings during those years we are ignorant. It is not a period illuminated for us by contemporary documents.

But there is yet other proof that Ford was writing long before 1621; his plays, as Mr. F. E. Pierce pointed out some years ago, fall into two very clearly marked classes, with widely differing metrical characteristics. The one group is obviously much later than the other, and it is worthy of note that "The Witch of Edmonton," which dates 1621, belongs to the later group. The inference is that the two plays belonging to the other group date long prior to that year.

Ford was still writing for the stage in May, 1638. He is known to have collaborated with Dekker, Rowley, and Webster; but after 1624 he seems to have worked almost entirely alone.

John Milton

The poet of "Paradise Lost" differs from all the other dramatists dealt with here in that he was not a writer for the public stage. All the others were professional dramatists, whereas the only work of his which gives him a claim—an undeniable claim—to inclusion was written for presentation in a private home and for a particular occasion. His greatness as a poet is too thoroughly recognized for it to be necessary to dwell upon it here; and his merits in the branch of the drama of which "Comus" is a representative are best considered when that work is under review.

Milton was born in London in November, 1608. He attended St. Paul's School, and in April, 1625, matriculated at Christ's College, Cambridge, which he quitted in 1632 with the degree of Master of Arts. He took an active part in the Puritan revolution, and for many years occupied the post of Secretary for Foreign Tongues under the Commonwealth, his knowledge of languages and his literary ability fitting him admirably for the work, which consisted in large measure in repelling the attacks made upon Cromwell by polemical writers in various countries. After the Restoration, he was, of course, deprived of office, whereupon he turned to the composition of his mighty masterpiece, "Paradise Lost." He died in November, 1674, having been totally blind since March, 1652.

In 1671 was published his greatest work in dramatic form, "Samson Agonistes," a play on the Greek model, not intended for the stage. This is undeniably one of the greatest of dramatic poems; but it is not available for inclusion here, inasmuch as it belongs to a later period

than that which this work covers. Here he can be considered only as the author of "Comus."

Richard Brome

The second last of the great writers for the public theatre of the Elizabethan era began his career not later than October, 1623, when the first dramatic work with which we know him to have been connected was licensed; and, though we cannot say definitely that he may not have written and staged something before that, it may be well to consider that as his induction into the playwriting business. He was, like Shirley, still writing when the theatres closed in 1642, and may be regarded as, next to that writer, showing the drama at its best at the close of the period. He died ten years later, in 1652.

Brome shows himself an excellent journeyman in a few comedies—"The City Wit," "The Weeding of Covent Garden," and "The Antipodes"—and considerably more than that in "A Jovial Crew." He was the possessor of no small fund of humor. This finds perhaps its best expression in "The Antipodes," a play of topsy-turvydom, which is not without its interest in reading, and would probably be very laughable acted. It is farce, some at least of which is on the level of high comedy; but, excellent as is the idea, it cannot be said that the dramatist makes the most of it. It affords not the only case of the writer proving unequal to his conception.

In most of his comedies Brome is the faithful follower of Ben Jonson, but in the best of all, the only one that attains really high merit, there is but little of the Jonson influence. He is like his master too in that he knows how to plot; but he had little of the ingenuity, the clarity, the consistency, or the carefulness of the greater man. He is apt to put so much into his stories that they are difficult to comprehend and to follow, "The City Wit" constituting a notable exception. His characters too, like his plots, lack something of coherence, and belong to the Jonsonian humor type rather than to the greater characterization exhibited by the master in "Bartholomew Fair" and "The Alchemist." Brome's moral tone is tolerably—it would be more correct to say "intolerably"—low; and in sheer coarseness he is scarcely to be excelled. He is perhaps more than any other the connecting link with the comic writers of the Restoration era. He may lack the tremendous satiric force of Wycherley; but he has no little of his faculty of ironic observation; if he writes mainly in verse, whereas Wycherley writes practically wholly in prose, the vigor of the dialogue keeps them close together; and the one, like the other, is ready to take a blackguard for a hero, though Wycherley does so only to rend him to

pieces, whereas Brome (whose name, by the way, is to be rhymed with "room") does so because he is seemingly incapable of appreciating his depth of moral depravity. But with Brome that quality is only occasional, whereas with that light of the Restoration era, Etherege, it is constant.

Brome's verse is better than it is generally credited with being. It is thoroughly workmanlike, very regular, conventionally correct, and admirably suited for the expression of the writer's pedestrian ideas. He is not a poet, and happily makes no pretensions to be one—a circumstance which differentiates him very pleasingly from Shirley. The simplicity and unpretentiousness of Brome are amongst his most attractive traits. It may be remarked, in conclusion, that the idea that he was at one time Jonson's body-servant has nothing to recommend it: he rather served him as a pupil in the art of playwriting.

A YORKSHIRE TRAGEDY

ATTRIBUTED TO

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

INTRODUCTION

It is unfortunate for the reputation of this remarkable playlet that it should have been published with an attribution to Shakespeare. That fact has hindered its appreciation as one of the most powerful tragedies of the period. Most scholars who have dealt with it have been intent on proving its non-Shakespearean authorship, and have for the purpose stressed what they have been pleased to consider its crudity, loudly proclaiming that Shakespeare could not have written so "crude" a work in the later stages of his career. In point of fact, Shakespeare could not have done it either early or late: it was something altogether alien to his genius. To set it up against Shakespeare's work is about as futile as it would be to attempt a parallel between Gabriele d'Annunzio and August Strindberg. Shakespeare is a writer of romantic tragedy; the unknown author of this little play is an out-and-out realist. The genre may not be so lofty a genre as that of the Shakespearean tragedy; but that fact affords no adequate reason for its depreciation. Of its sort, it is quite in the first rank. It is as tense, as gripping, as brutally forceful, as vivid, as breathless, and as fiercely naturalistic as any of the little masterpieces of the veristic drama that flowed from the pen of Giovanni Verga.

Yet, though a study of the play should positively bar an attribution to Shakespeare, it is only to him that the external evidence ascribes it; and that evidence is not to be pooh-poohed. It was entered in the Stationers' Register, May, 1608, as "A Yorkshire Tragedy, written by Wylliam Shakespere." The quarto issued the same year also carried an attribution to Shakespeare. In 1619 it was issued again by the same publisher, and once more ascribed to Shakespeare. "Pericles" has found its way into the Shakespeare canon on grounds rather less good than these. Both of them were excluded from the first folio, apparently because they were not regarded by Heminges and Condell as the work of the dramatist. Yet the internal evidence shows that, if they were right in excluding "A Yorkshire Tragedy," they were wrong in excluding "Pericles."

If the one-act play be not Shakespeare's, whose is it? That is a question not easily answered. There are certain hints of Middleton;

but, if "The Revenger's Tragedy," of about the same period, be his, it is doubtful if this can be; and, even if the longer play be regarded as Tourneur's, a sufficiency of proof of Middleton's authorship of the shorter is still lacking. The strongest case has been made out on behalf of Wilkins, first, by the late Bertram Dobell, and, later, by Mr. Dugdale Sykes. It is easy to see where the idea of Wilkins' authorship originated; that dramatist wrote a play, "The Miseries of Enforced Marriage," upon the earlier life of the miserable wretch whose ghastly crime forms the subject of the one-acter.

This crime was committed on April 23, 1605, Walter Calverley murdering two of his children, attempting the murder of his wife, and setting forth to slay also his youngest child, who was at nurse—an additional crime which he was happily prevented from committing. For these iniquities he was pressed to death on August 5 of the same year.

"The Miseries of Enforced Marriage," both registered and published in 1607, gives a sketch of the married life of Calverley up to 1604, and has a happy ending. As this play and "A Yorkshire Tragedy" were given by the same company, the King's men, the suggestion was inevitable that they were closely related, especially as the tragedy seems to complete the other. It was natural that that ingenious, if somewhat imaginative, scholar Fleay should put forward this idea, which had much to recommend it. There are certain striking facts that point in this direction, notably the circumstance that Wilkins' play was entered in the Stationers' Register as a tragedy, which would seem to indicate that it concluded with the murders for which Calverley was executed. Might not then the one-act play be the missing ending? In this connection, we have to take note of the title at the top of the first page of the text, "All's One, or, One of the foure Plaies in one, called a Yorkshire Tragedy." That is held to show that the playlet was one of four little plays all dealing with the life of Calverley. It is probable, but by no means certain. In any case, it does not follow that the other three plays have been welded into "The Miseries." It is against such an assumption that by no manner of manipulation can one make three plays out of Wilkins' drama; and there are many other facts that tell against the theory. The two plays are mutually contradictory. If the theory were sound, there would naturally be a concord between the tragedy and all but the final scene of "The Miseries;" but, whereas the latter, save for V, hangs together remarkably well for an Elizabethan drama and is strikingly free from inconsistencies, it is often at odds with the smaller play. The only characters common to the two plays are the husband, the wife, and the children, and these are all nameless in the tragedy, as is not the case in the other play, where,

however, they have not the actual names of the persons whose story is told. Wilkins adopted the policy of altering the names; the other writer, that of giving no names at all. It does not seem reasonable to suppose that, to alter the ending, Wilkins would also change his system of nomenclature. Not only does the Husband of the one play bear very little resemblance to the Scarborow of the other, but the former has chosen a wife, and declares that he married only "for fashion sake," whereas the very foundation of the other play is that Scarborow is forced to marry against his inclination. In the Husband's brutal tauntings of the Wife in the tragedy, this fact would assuredly have been stressed (as it is, in similar circumstances, in "The Miseries"), had it been true of the Husband, as it is of Scarborow. This is a hurdle that it is not easy for the advocate of Wilkins' authorship to surmount.

It is not the only hurdle. The Guardian, who is dead in Act V of "The Miseries," is here alive, so that, if the playlet was part of "The Miseries," it must have taken the place of the last act; but the reconciliation of husband and wife with which "The Miseries" ends must have occurred for the events of the "Tragedy" to be possible; so that the idea that this little play constitutes the original tragic ending of the Wilkins drama will scarcely hold water.

There is also the mystery of the opening scene, which has nothing whatever to do with the rest of the play. Fleay suggested that it really belonged to "The Miseries," and came between II 1 and II 2 of that play; but it would be more reasonable to regard it as an alternative version of the bringing of the news of Scarborow-Calverley's marriage; and it would be even more reasonable to consider it portion of some other of "The Four Plays in One," which had nothing to do with "The Miseries." Even then it is not easy to find a reason for its introduction, unless we are to suppose that there was some connection which has been cut out. The fact is that the scene has no connection with either play. It covers part of the same ground as II 2 of "The Miseries;" but the spirit is different. The "young mistress" of this scene is plainly meant to be identifiable with Clare Harcup, whose story constitutes one of the three elements of "The Miseries;" but Clare died in the second act of that play; the circumstances in which she was left deserted do not accord with those detailed here; and her condition in II 2 is inconsistent with that of the "young mistress." It is also difficult to understand why the latter's servants should regard her jilter as "the young master."

But, even if these inconsistencies were not so nearly fatal to the theory of Wilkins' responsibility for "A Yorkshire Tragedy," it yet would be difficult to accept it on the internal evidence. Not only is the tragedy much the more vital, the work obviously of a more potent

writer, superior to Wilkins in every dramatic quality, in literary accomplishment, in characterization, and in structure; but the style of the prose and the verse of the two plays is not the same, so that it is not a case of a single writer, writing below himself on the one occasion, and not on the other. There is little resemblance in the writing habits of the two men, save in the curious doubling of words and phrases; and this practice is found in many plays with which Wilkins had nothing to do: Marston, Dekker, Middleton, Rowley, and others all resorted to it at times. (It is, it may be remarked, carried to greater lengths in "A Yorkshire Tragedy" than in the Wilkins play.) Mr. Sykes has pointed out other characteristics of Wilkins' to be found here; but they are all of them either destitute of significance or so common among Elizabethan dramatists that their occurrence in Wilkins proves nothing. The one strong argument that remains for a connection between the two plays is afforded by the fact that both were produced by the one company, the King's men. That at least excludes the possibility of their being rival plays.

If it is difficult to determine by whom the tragedy was written, it is difficult also, though much less difficult, to determine when it was produced. As the suicide of Clare in "The Miseries" is not in accord with facts, it may look as if the tragedy were the later of the two, the author having access to a later and more reliable version; but, as a matter of fact, he seems to have based his work upon the account contained in the pamphlet entitled "Two most unnatural and bloody murthers," which was licensed for printing as early as June, 1605, only fifty days after the committing of the crime, and which Mr. Sykes has shown some reason to regard as the work of Wilkins himself. It may not be unreasonable to suppose that the tragedy was written before the execution of Calverley, or at least before the news of it had reached London, though only nineteen days after the event an account of it was entered in the Stationers' Register. That we are not shown the condemnation of the Husband, so as to be made tolerably sure of his judicial murder, does not, however, necessarily imply this. The dramatist may have been too good an artist to take his story further than he did take it; or it may be that, though one of four plays, "A Yorkshire Tragedy" was not the last. It may not be probable, but it is not impossible, that a final play was devoted to the trial and execution of the murderer. Waiving that possibility, we may suppose that one of the plays had to do with the "young mistress," and one with the wooing of the Wife. The remaining two it seems most natural to allot to the earlier married life of the unhappy couple and the tragedy. The story of Ilford and Scarborow's sister, which forms so large a part of "The Miseries" had, in all likelihood, no place in the "Four Plays in One."

Which of the two was the earlier is purely a matter of surmise; but a date of 1605 for the tragedy certainly seems likeliest. Wilkins' play, as purporting to give certain incidents of Calverley's earlier doings, would naturally come later; and, if that argument be sound, the tragedy must date before the end of July, 1607, when the longer play was licensed for printing.

Here is a work of genius, written at a white heat. It presents us with a most vigorous realization of a madman, one of the finest in any literature. The other character-studies are nothing, the author concentrating all his energies upon the depicting of the insane fury of his chief character. If it had no other claim to consideration, the success of that unique presentment should be sufficient.

CHARACTERS

HUSBAND.
MASTER OF A COLLEGE.
OLIVER
RALPH } *Serving-men.*
SAMUEL

KNIGHT, *a Justice of Peace.*
WIFE.
MAID-SERVANT.
A LITTLE BOY.
Other Servants, and Officers.

PLACE: *England*

TIME: 1605

A YORKSHIRE TRAGEDY

Scene I

Sam, *the servant of a young lady who lives in Yorkshire, has been to London on a visit. Two of his fellow-servants,* Oliver *and* Ralph, *are expecting his return. Their mistress has been betrothed to a young man who has, unknown to her, married another woman.*

Oli. Sirrah Ralph, my young mistress is in such a pitiful passionate humor for the long absence of her love— [10

Ralph. Why, can you blame her? why, apples hanging longer on the tree than when they are ripe makes so many fallings; viz., mad wenches, because they are not gathered in time, are fain to drop of themselves, and then 'tis common, you know, for every man to take 'em up.

Oli. Mass, thou sayest true; 'tis common indeed: but, sirrah, is neither our young master returned, nor our fellow Sam come from London? [21

Ralph. Neither of either, as the Puritan bawd says. 'Slid, I hear Sam: Sam's come, here's!—[*Calling.*] Tarry! come. —I' faith, now my nose itches for news.

Oli. And so does mine elbow.[1]

Sam, *calling within.* Where are you there?—Boy, look you walk my horse with discretion; I have rid him [30 simply. I warrant his skin sticks to his back with very heat: if 'a should catch cold and get the cough of the lungs, I were well served, were I not?

Sam *comes in. He is carrying a number of things which he has brought from the metropolis.*

What, Ralph and Oliver.

Ambo. Honest fellow Sam, welcome, i' faith! what tricks hast thou brought from London? [41

[1] B, I' faith, now my nose itches for news, Oliver, and so does mine elbow.

Sam. You see I am hanged after the truest fashion: three hats, and two glasses bobbing upon 'em, two rebato wires upon my breast, a capcase by my side, a brush at my back, an almanac in my pocket, and three ballats in my codpiece: nay, I am the true picture of a common servingman. [49

Oli. I'll swear thou art. Thou mayst set up when thou wilt. There's many a one begins with less, I can tell thee, that proves a rich man ere he dies. But what's the news from London, Sam?

Ralph. Ay, that's well said; what's the news from London, sirrah? My young mistress keeps such a puling for her love.

Sam. Why, the more fool she; ay, the more ninny-hammer she. [60

Oli. Why, Sam, why?

Sam. Why, he's married to another long ago.

Ambo. I' faith, ye jest.

Sam. Why, did you not know that till now? why, he's married, beats his wife, and has two or three children by her: for you must note that any woman bears the more when she is beaten. [69

Ralph. Ay, that's true, for she bears the blows.

Oli. Sirrah Sam, I would not for two years' wages, my young mistress knew so much; she'd run upon the left hand of her wit, and ne'er be her own woman again.

Sam. And I think she was blest in her cradle, that he never came in her bed: why, he has consumed all, pawned his lands, and made his university brother [80 stand in wax for him. (There's a fine phrase for a scrivener!) Puh, he owes more than his skin's worth.

Oli. Is't possible?

Sam. Nay, I'll tell you moreover, he

calls his wife "whore" as familiarly as one would call Mal and Dol, and his children "bastards" as naturally as can be.—But what have we here? I thought 'twas somewhat pulled down my breeches: I quite forgot my two poting-sticks. These came from London; now any thing is good here that comes from London.

Oli. Ay, far-fetched, you know.

Sam. But speak in your conscience, i' faith, have not we as good potingsticks i' th' country as need to be put i' th' fire? The mind of a thing is all. The mind of a thing's all, and, as thou saidst e'en now, far-fetched is the best things for ladies.

Oli. Ay, and for waiting gentlewomen, too.

Sam. But, Ralph, what, is our beer sour this thunder?

Oli. No, no, it holds countenance yet.

Sam. Why, then, follow me; I'll teach you the finest humor to be drunk in. I learned it at London last week.

Ambo. I' faith, let's hear it, let's hear it.

Sam. The bravest humor! 'twould do a man good to be drunk in't; they call it knighting in London, when they drink upon their knees.

Ambo. Faith, that's excellent. Come, follow me: I'll give you all the degrees on't in order. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II

The Wife, *in Calverley Hall, bewails the recklessness and extravagance of her* Husband.

Wife. What will become of us? all will away.
My husband never ceases in expense,
Both to consume his credit and his house;
And 'tis set down by heaven's just decree,
That Riot's child must needs be Beggary.
Are these the virtues that his youth did promise?
Dice, and voluptuous meetings, midnight revels,
Taking his bed with surfeits, ill beseeming
The ancient honor of his house and name!
And this not all; but, that which kills me most,
When he recounts his losses and false fortunes,
The weakness of his state so much dejected,
Not as a man repentant, but half mad
His fortunes cannot answer his expense,
He sits and sullenly locks up his arms,
Forgetting heaven, looks downward, which makes him
Appear so dreadful that he frights my heart,
Walks heavily, as if his soul were earth;
Not penitent for those his sins are past,
But vexed his money cannot make them last:
A fearful melancholy, ungodly sorrow!
Oh, yonder he comes; now, in despite of ills,
I'll speak to him, and I will hear him speak,
And do my best to drive it from his heart.

Enter Husband.

Hus. Pox o' th' last throw! it made
Five hundred angels vanish from my sight.
I'm damned, I'm damned: the angels have forsook me.
Nay, 'tis certainly true; for he that has
No coin is damned in this world: he's gone, he's gone.

Wife. Dear husband!

Hus. Oh! most punishment of all, I have a wife.

Wife. I do entreat you, as you love your soul,
Tell me the cause of this your discontent.

Hus. A vengeance strip thee naked! thou art cause,
Effect, quality, property, thou, thou, thou! [*Exit.*

Wife. Bad turned to worse! both beggary of the soul
As of the body; and so much unlike
Himself at first, as if some vexëd spirit
Had got his form upon him.—

Re-enter HUSBAND.

<He comes again.
He says I am the cause; I never yet
Spoke less than words of duty and [70
of love.>

HUS. If marriage be honorable, then cuckolds are honorable, for they cannot be made without marriage. Fool! what meant I to marry to get beggars? now must my eldest son be a knave or nothing; he cannot live upon th' fool,[2] for he will have no land to maintain him: that mortgage sits like a snaffle upon mine inheritance, and makes me [80 chaw upon iron. My second son must be a promoter, and my third a thief, or an underputter, a slave pander. Oh, beggary, beggary, to what base uses dost thou put a man! I think the Devil scorns to be a bawd: he bears himself more proudly, has more care on's credit. Base, slavish, abject, filthy poverty!

WIFE. Good sir, by all our vows I do
beseech you, [90
Show me the true cause of your discontent.

HUS. Money, money, money; and thou must supply me.

WIFE. Alas, I am the least cause of your discontent;
Yet what is mine, either in rings or jewels,
Use to your own desire, but, I beseech you, [100
As y'are a gentleman by many bloods,
Though I myself be out of your respect,
Think on the state of these three lovely boys
You have been father to.

HUS. Puh! Bastards, bastards, bastards; begot in tricks, begot in tricks.

WIFE. Heaven knows how those words wrong me, but I may
Endure these griefs among a thou- [110
sand more.
Oh, call to mind your lands already mortgaged,
Yourself wound into debts, your hopeful brother
At the university in bonds for you,
Like to be seized upon; and—

HUS. Ha' done, thou harlot,
Whom, though for fashion sake I marriëd, [120
I never could abide; thinkst thou thy words
Shall kill my pleasures? Fall off to thy friends;
Thou and thy bastards beg: I will not bate
A whit in humor! Midnight, still I love you,
And revel in your company.—Curbed in,
Shall it be said in all societies, [130
That I broke custom, that I flagged in money?
No, those thy jewels I will play as freely
As when my state was fullest.

WIFE. Be it so.

HUS. Nay I protest, and take that for an earnest, [*Spurns her.*
I will for ever hold thee in contempt,
And never touch the sheets that cover thee, [140
But be divorced in bed till thou consent
Thy dowry shall be sold, to give new life
Unto those pleasures which I most affect.

WIFE. Sir, do but turn a gentle eye on me,
And what the law shall give me leave to do
You shall command.

HUS. Look it be done: shall I want dust,[3] and, like a slave, [150
Wear nothing in my pockets but my hands,
To fill them up with nails?
(Oh, much against my blood!) Let it be done.
I was never made to be a looker-on,
A bawd to dice; I'll shake the drabs myself
And make 'em yield. I say, look it be done. [160

WIFE. I take my leave: it shall.

HUS. Speedily, speedily. [*Exit* WIFE. *As she goes out by one door three* GENTLEMEN *enter by another.*] I hate the very hour I chose a wife: a trouble, trouble! three children, like three evils, hang upon me. Fie, fie, fie, strumpet

[2] There must be something wrong here.

[3] money.

and bastards, strumpet and bastards!
1 Gent. Still do those loathsome thoughts jar on your tongue? [170
Yourself to stain the honor of your wife,
Nobly descended! Those whom men call mad
Endanger others; but he's more than mad
That wounds himself, whose own words do proclaim
Scandals unjust, to soil his better name:
It is not fit; I pray, forsake it.
2 Gent. Good sir, let modesty reprove you. [181
3 Gent. Let honest kindness sway so much with you.
Hus. God den, I thank you, sir! how do you? adieu! I'm glad to see you. Farewell! instructions, admonitions!
[*Exeunt* Gentlemen.

Enter a Servant.

Hus. How now, sirrah; what would you? [190
Ser. Only to certify you, sir, that my mistress was met by the way, by them who were sent for her up to London by her honorable uncle, your worship's late guardian.
Hus. So, sir, then she is gone; and so may you be. But let her look that the thing be done she wots of: or hell will stand more pleasant than her house at home. [*Exit* Servant. [200

Enter a Gentleman.

Gent. Well or ill met, I care not.
Hus. No, nor I.
Gent. I am come with confidence to chide you.
Hus. Who? me?
Chide me? Do't finely then: let it not move me;
For, if thou chidst me angry, I shall strike. [210
Gent. Strike thine own follies, for it is they deserve
To be well beaten. We are now in private:
There's none but thou and I. Thou'rt fond and peevish,
An unclean rioter: thy lands and credit
Lie now both sick of a consumption.
I am sorry for thee: that man spends with shame [220
That with his riches does consume his name:
And such art thou.
Hus. Peace!
Gent. No, thou shalt hear me further:
Thy fathers and forefathers' worthy honors,
Which were our country monuments, our grace, [220
Follies in thee begin now to deface.
The spring time of thy youth did fairly promise
Such a most fruitful summer to thy friends
It scarce can enter into men's beliefs,
Such dearth should hang on thee. We that see it
Are sorry to believe it: in thy change, [239
This voice into all places will be hurled:
Thou and the devil has deceived the world.
Hus. I'll not endure thee.
Gent. But, of all the worst,
Thy virtuous wife right honorably allied,
Thou hast proclaimed a strumpet.
Hus. Nay, then I know thee.
Thou art her champion, thou, her private friend,
The party you wot on. [250
Gent. Oh ignoble thought!
I am past my patient blood: shall I stand idle
And see my reputation touched to death?
Hus. 'T'as galled you, this, has it?
Gent. No, monster, I will prove
My thoughts did only tend to virtuous love.
Hus. Love of her virtues? there it goes.
Gent. Base spirit, [260
To lay thy hate upon the fruitful honor
Of thine own bed.
[*They fight, and the* Husband *is hurt.*
Hus. Oh!
Gen. Woult thou yield it yet?
Hus. Sir, sir, I have not done with you.

GENT. I hope nor ne'er shall do.
[*Fight again.*
HUS. Have you got tricks? are you in cunning with me?
GENT. No, plain and right.
He needs no cunning that for truth doth fight. [HUSBAND *falls down.*
HUS. Hard fortune, am I levelled with the ground?
GENT. Now, sir, you lie at mercy.
HUS. Ay, you slave.
GENT. Alas, that hate should bring us to our grave.
You see my sword's not thirsty for your life;
I am sorrier for your wound than yourself.
Y'are of a virtuous house; show virtuous deeds;
'Tis not your honor, 'tis your folly bleeds;
Much good has been expected in your life;
Cancel not all men's hopes: you have a wife,
Kind and obedient: heap not wrongful shame
On her [and] your posterity, [nor blame
Your overthrow;] let only sin be sore,
And, by this fall, rise never to fall more.
And so I leave you. [*Exit.*
HUS. Has the dog left me, then,
After his tooth hath bit[4] me? oh, my heart
Would fain leap after him. Revenge, I say,
I'm mad to be revenged.—My strumpet wife,
It is thy quarrel that rips thus my flesh,
And makes my breast spit blood; but thou shalt bleed.
Vanquished? got down? unable e'en to speak?
Surely 'tis want of money makes men weak.
Ay, 'twas that o'erthrew me; I'd ne'er been down else. [*Exit.*

SCENE III

The WIFE *is in a riding habit, having just returned from her expedition. A* SERVING-MAN *is with her.*

SER. Faith, mistress, if it might not be presumption
In me to tell you so, for his excuse
You had small reason, knowing his abuse.
WIFE. I grant I had; but, alas,
Why should our faults at home be spread abroad?
'Tis grief enough within doors. At first sight
Mine uncle could run o'er his prodigal life
As perfectly as if his serious eye
Had numbered all his follies;
Knew of his mortgaged lands, his friends in bonds,
Himself withered with debts; and in that minute
Had I added his usage and unkindness,
'Twould have confounded every thought of good;
Where now, fathering his riots on his youth,
Which time and tame experience will shake off,
Guessing his kindness to me (as I smoothed him
With all the skill I had), though his deserts
Are in form uglier than an unshaped bear,
He's ready to prefer him to some office
And place at Court, a good and sure relief
To all his stooping fortunes: 'twill be a means, I hope,
To make new league between us, and redeem
His virtues with his lands.
SER. I should think so, mistress. If he should not now be kind to you and love you, and cherish you up, I should think the devil himself kept open house in him.
WIFE. I doubt not but he will now: prithee, leave me; I think I hear him coming.
SER. I am gone. [*Exit.*
WIFE. By this good means I shall preserve my lands,
And free my husband out of usurers' hands:

[4] B, left.

Now there is no need of sale; my uncle's kind;
I hope, if aught, this will content his mind.—
Here comes my husband.

Enter HUSBAND. [60

HUS. Now, are you come? where's the money? let's see the money; is the rubbish sold, those wiseacres, your lands? why, when? the money! where is't? pour't down, down with it, down with it: I say pour't o'th' ground! let's see't, let's see't.

WIFE. Good sir, keep but in patience, and I hope my words shall like you well: I bring you better comfort than the [70 sale of my dowry.

HUS. Hah, what's that?

WIFE. Pray, do not fright me, sir, but vouchsafe me hearing: my uncle, glad of your kindness to me and mild usage—for so I made it to him—has, in pity of your declining fortunes, provided a place for you at Court of worth and credit, which so much overjoyed me— [79

HUS. Out on thee, filth! over and overjoyed, [*spurns her*] when I'm in torments? Thou politic whore, subtler than nine Devils, was this thy journey to Nuncke, to set down the history of me, of my state and fortunes? Shall I, that dedicated myself to pleasure, be now confined in service to crouch and stand like an old man i'th' hams, my hat off? I, that never could abide to uncover my head i'th' church! base slut! this [90 fruit bears thy complaints.

WIFE. Oh, heaven knows
That my complaints were praises, and best words
Of you and your estate: only my friends
Knew of our mortgaged lands, and were possessed
Of every accident before I came.
If thou suspect it but a plot in me [99
To keep my dowry, or for mine own good
Or my poor children's (though it suits a mother
To show a natural care in their reliefs),
Yet I'll forget myself to calm your blood:
Consume it, as your pleasure counsels you,
And all I wish e'en clemency affords:
Give me but comely looks and modest words.

HUS. Money, whore, money; or [110 I'll— [*Draws his dagger.*

Enter a SERVANT *very hastily.*

What the devil? how now? thy hasty news?

SER., *too scared to deliver his message.* May it please you, sir—

HUS. What? may I not look upon my dagger? Speak, villain, or I will execute the point on thee: quick, short. [119

SER. Why, sir, a gentleman from the University stays below to speak with you.

HUS. From the University? so! University—that long word runs through me. [*Exit.*

WIFE. Was ever wife so wretchedly beset? [*Exit* SERVANT.
Had not this news stepped in between, the point
Had offered violence unto my breast.
That which some women call great [130 misery
Would show but little here; would scarce be seen
Amongst my miseries. I may compare
For wretched fortunes with all wives that are.
Nothing will please him, until all be nothing.
He calls it slavery to be preferred;
A place of credit, a base servitude. [140
What shall become of me, and my poor children,
Two here, and one at nurse, my pretty beggars?
I see how ruin with a palsy hand
Begins to shake this[5] ancient seat to dust:
The heavy weight of sorrow draws my lids [149
Over my dankish eyes: I can scarce see:
Thus grief will last; it wakes and sleeps with me.

[5] B, the.

Scene IV

In another apartment in the house the Husband *is receiving the* Master of the College *which his brother is attending.*

Hus. Please you draw near, sir; y'are exceeding welcome.

Mast. That's my doubt; I fear I come not to be welcome.

Hus. Yes, howsoever.

Mast. 'Tis not my fashion, sir, to dwell in long circumstance, but to be [10 plain and effectual; therefore, to the purpose. The cause of my setting forth was piteous and lamentable: that hopeful young gentleman, your brother, whose virtues we all love dearly, through your default and unnatural negligence, lies in bond executed for your debt, a prisoner, all his studies amazed,[6] his hope struck dead, and the pride of his youth muffled in these dark clouds of oppression. [20

Hus. Hum, um, um!

Mast. Oh, you have killed the towardest hope of all our university: wherefore, without repentance and amends, expect ponderous and sudden judgments to fall grievously upon you. Your brother, a man who profited in his divine employments, might have made ten thousand souls fit for heaven, now by your careless courses cast in prison, which you must [30 answer for, and assure your spirit it will come home at length.

Hus. Oh God! oh!

Mast. Wise men think ill of you, others speak ill of you, no man loves you, nay, even those whom honesty condemns condemn you; and take this from the virtuous affection I bear your brother: never look for prosperous hour, good thought, quiet sleeps, contented [40 walks, nor anything that makes man perfect till you redeem him. What is your answer? how will you bestow him? upon desperate misery or better hopes? I suffer, till I hear your answer.

Hus. Sir, you have much wrought with me. I feel you in my soul, you are your art's master. I never had sense till now; your syllables have cleft me. Both for your words and pains I thank you: I [50 cannot but acknowledge grievous wrongs done to my brother, mighty, mighty, mighty wrongs.—[*Calling.*] Within there!

Enter a Serving-man.

Hus. Sir, fill me a bowl of wine.—
Alas, poor brother,
Bruised with an execution for my sake!
[*Exit* Servant.

Mast. A bruise indeed makes many a mortal sore [60
Till the grave cure 'em.

Re-enter Servant, *with wine.*

Hus. Sir, I begin to you, y' have chid your welcome.

Mast. I could have wished it better for your sake.
I pledge you, sir, to the kind man in prison.

Hus. Let it be so. [*They both drink.*] Now, sir, if you so please to spend but a [70 few minutes in a walk about my grounds below, my man here shall attend you. I doubt not but by that time to be furnished of a sufficient answer, and therein my brother fully satisfied.

Mast. Good sir, in that the angels would be pleased,
And the world's murmurs calmed; and I should say [79
I set forth then upon a lucky day. [*Exit.*

Hus. Oh, thou confused man! thy pleasant sins have undone thee, thy damnation has beggared thee! That heaven should say we must not sin, and yet made women! gives our senses way to find pleasure, which, being found, confounds us. Why should we know those things so much misuse us? Oh, would virtue had been forbidden! we should then have proved all virtuous, for 'tis [90 our blood to love what were forbidden. Had not drunkenness been forbidden, what man would have been fool to a beast, and zany to a swine, to show tricks in the mire? what is there in three dice to make a man draw thrice three thousand acres into the compass of a round little table, and with the gentleman's palsy in the hand shake out his posterity thieves

[6] upset.

or beggars? 'Tis done! I ha' done't, i' faith, terrible, horrible misery!—How well was I left! very well, very well. My lands shewed like a full moon about me; but now the moon's i' th' last quarter, waning, waning; and I am mad to think that moon was mine; mine and my father's, and my forefathers'—generations, generations: down goes the house of us, down, down it sinks. Now is the name a beggar, begs in me! that name which hundreds of years has made this shire famous, in me and my posterity runs out. In my seed five are made miserable besides myself: my riot is now my brother's gaoler, my wife's sighing, my three boys' penury, and mine own confusion. Why sit my hairs upon my cursëd head? [*Tears his hair.*

Will not this poison scatter them? oh, my brother's
In execution among devils that
Stretch him and make him give; and I in want,
Not able for to live, nor to redeem him.
Divines and dying men may talk of hell;
But in my heart her several torments dwell.
Slavery and misery! Who in this case
Would not take up money upon his soul,
Pawn his salvation, live at interest?
I, that did ever in abundance dwell,
For me to want, exceeds the throes of hell.

Enter his little Son *with a top and a scourge.*

Son. What ail you father? are you not well? I cannot scourge my top as long as you stand so: you take up all the room with your wide legs. [*Seeing, and little understanding, the convulsive movements of the madman's face.*] Puh, you cannot make me afeard with this; I fear no vizards, nor bugbears.

[*The* Husband *takes up the* Child *by the skirts of his long coat in one hand and draws his dagger with the other.*

Hus. Up, sir, for here thou hast no inheritance left.

Son. Oh, what will you do, father? I am your white boy.

Hus. Thou shalt be my red boy: take that. [*Strikes him.*

Son. Oh, you hurt me, father.

Hus. My eldest beggar! thou shalt not live to ask an usurer bread, to cry at a great man's gate, or follow good your honor by a couch; no, nor your brother; 'tis charity to brain you.

Son. How shall I learn now my head's broke?

Hus. Bleed, bleed, rather than beg, beg! [*Stabs him.*

Be not thy name's disgrace:
Spurn thou thy fortunes first, if they be base:
Come view thy second brother.—Fates,
My children's blood
Shall spin into your faces, you shall see
How confidently we scorn beggary! [*Exit with his* Son.

Scene V.

In a bedroom in the house, a Maid *has the second* Child *in her arms. The* Mother *is lying on the bed sleeping.*

Maid. Sleep, sweet babe; sorrow makes thy mother sleep:
It bodes small good when heaven's fall's so deep.
Hush, pretty boy, thy hopes might have been better.
'Tis lost at dice what ancient honor won:
Hard when the father plays away the son!
Nothing but misery serves in this house,
Ruin and desolation. Oh!

Enter Husband *with the* Boy *bleeding.*

Hus. Whore, give me that boy.
[*Strives with her for the* Child.

Maid. Oh help, help! out, alas, murder, murder!

Hus. Are you gossiping, prating, sturdy quean?
I'll break your clamor with your neck: down stairs!
Tumble, tumble, headlong! [*Throws her down.*] So!

The surest way to charm a woman's tongue
Is break her neck: a politician did it.
SON. Mother, mother; I am killed, [30
mother.
WIFE, *awaking*. Ha, who's that cried? oh me, my children!
Both, both, both; bloody, bloody.
[*Catches up the younger* BOY.
HUS. Strumpet, let go the boy, let go the beggar.
WIFE. Oh, my sweet husband!
HUS. Filth, harlot!
WIFE. Oh, what will you do, dear [40
husband?
HUS. Give me the bastard.
WIFE. Your own sweet boy!
HUS. There are too many beggars.
WIFE. Good my husband—
HUS. Doest thou prevent me still?
WIFE. Oh God!
HUS. Have at his heart! [*Stabs at the child in her arms; gets it from her.*
WIFE. Oh, my dear boy! [50
HUS. Brat, thou shalt not live to shame thy house! [*Stabs the child and then her.*
WIFE. O heaven!
[*She is hurt and sinks down.*
HUS. And perish! now begone:
There's whores enow, and want would make thee one.

Enter a lusty SERVANT.

SER. Oh, sir, what deeds are these?
HUS. Base slave, my vassal: [60
Comest thou between my fury to question me?
SER. Were you the devil, I would hold you, sir.
HUS. Hold me? presumption! I'll undo thee for't.
SER. 'Sblood, you have undone us all, sir.
HUS. Tug at thy master!
SER. Tug at a monster! [70
HUS. Have I no power? shall my slave fetter me?
SER. Nay, then, the devil wrastles, I am thrown.
HUS. Oh, villain, now I'll tug thee [*overcomes him*], now I'll tear thee;
Set quick spurs to my vassal, bruise him, trample him.
So! I think thou wilt not follow me [80
in haste.
My horse stands ready saddled. Away, away!
Now to my brat at nurse, my sucking beggar.
Fates, I'll not leave you one to trample on.

SCENE VI

In the grounds of the house the HUSBAND *meets the* MASTER OF THE COLLEGE.

MAST. How is't with you, sir? methinks you look
Of a distracted color.
HUS. Who? I, sir? 'tis but your fancy.
Please you walk in, sir, and I'll soon resolve you:
I want one small part to make up [10
the sum,
And then my brother shall rest satisfied.
MAST. I shall be glad to see it: sir, I'll attend you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII

We are back in the bedroom with the victims of the HUSBAND'S *furious assault.*

SER. Oh, I am scarce able to heave up myself:
H'as so bruised me with his devilish weight,
And torn my flesh with his blood-hasty spur!
A man before of easy constitution, [10
Till now hell's power supplied to his soul's wrong.
Oh, how damnation can make weak men strong!

Enter MASTER *and two* SERVANTS.

Oh, the most piteous deed, sir, since you came.
MAST. A deadly greeting! has he summed up these
To satisfy his brother? here's another: [20
And by the bleeding infants, the dead mother.

WIFE. Oh, oh!
MAST. Surgeons, surgeons! she recovers life.
One of his men all faint and bloodied!
1 SER. Follow, our murderous master has took horse,
To kill his child at nurse: oh, follow quickly.
MAST. I am the readiest, it shall be my charge
To raise the town upon him.
[*Exeunt* MASTER *and* SERVANTS.
1 SER. Good sir, do follow him.
WIFE. Oh, my children!
1 SER. How is it with my most afflicted mistress?
WIFE. Why do I now recover? why half live?
To see my children bleed before mine eyes?
A sight able to kill a mother's breast
Without an executioner! what, art thou mangled too?
1 SER. I, thinking to prevent what his quick mischiefs
Had so soon acted, came and rushed upon him.
We struggled, but a fouler strength than his
O'erthrew me with his arms; then did he bruise me
And rent my flesh, and robbed me of my hair,
Like a man mad in executiön;
Made me unfit to rise and follow him.
WIFE. What is it has beguiled him of all grace
And stole away humanity from his breast?
To slay his children, purpose to kill his wife,
And spoil his servants.

Enter two SERVANTS.

BOTH SERV. Sir, please you leave this most accursëd place,
A surgeon waits within.
WIFE. Willing to leave it!
'Tis guilty of sweet blood, innocent blood:
Murder has took this chamber with full hands,
And will ne'er out as long as the house stands.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE VIII

The HUSBAND, *in rushing to the murder of his youngest child, is thrown from his horse. He now appears on foot on the highroad.*

HUS. Oh, stumbling jade, the spavin overtake thee,
The fifty diseases stop thee!
Oh, I am sorely bruised; plague founder thee!
Thou runn'st at ease and pleasure. Heart of chance!
To throw me now within a flight o' th' town,
In such plain even ground, 'sfoot, a man
May dice upon't, and throw away the meadows!
Filthy beast!
VOICES *within.* Follow, follow, follow!
HUS. Ha! I hear sounds of men, like hue and cry:
Up, up, and struggle to thy horse; make on;
Dispatch that little beggar, and all's done.
VOICES *within.* Here, this way, this way!
HUS. At my back? oh,
What fate have I? my limbs deny me go;
My will is bated: beggary claims a part.
Oh, could I here reach to the infant's heart!

Enter the MASTER OF THE COLLEGE, *three* GENTLEMEN, *and Officers with halberds.*

ALL. Here, here: yonder, yonder.
MAST. Unnatural, flinty, more than barbarous:
The Scythians or the marble-hearted fates
Could not have acted more remorseless deeds
In their relentless natures than these of thine:
Was this the answer I long waited on,
The satisfaction for thy prisoned brother?

Hus. Why, he can have no more on's than our skins,
And some of 'em want but flaying.
1 Gent. Great sins have made him impudent.
Mast. H'as shed so much blood that he cannot blush.
2 Gent. Away with him, bear him along to the Justices;
A gentleman of worship dwells at hand;
There shall his deeds be blazed.
Hus. Why, all the better.
My glory 'tis to have my action known:
I grieve for nothing, but I missed of one.
Mast. There's little of a father in that grief:
Bear him away. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IX

Two or three Gentlemen *have just brought to a* Knight, *who is a magistrate, the story of the crime. The scene is the* Knight's *house.*

Kni. Endangered so his wife? murdered his children?
1 Gent. So the cry comes.
Kni. I am sorry I e'er knew him,
That ever he took life and natural being
From such an honored stock, and fair descent,
Till this black minute without stain or blemish.
1 Gent. Here come the men.

Enter the Master of the College *and the rest, with the prisoner.*

Kni. The serpent[7] of his house! I'm sorry
For this time that I am in place of justice.
Mast. Please you, sir.
Kni. Do not repeat it twice; I know too much,
Would it had ne'er been thought on.—Sir, I bleed for you.
1 Gent. Your father's sorrows are alive in me:
What made you shew such monstrous cruelty?
Hus. In a word, sir, I have consumed all, played away long acre, and I thought it the charitablest deed I could do to cozen beggary and knock my house o' th' head.
Kni. Oh, in a cooler blood you will repent it.
Hus. I repent now, that one's left unkilled,
My brat at nurse. Oh, I would full fain have weaned him.
Kni. Well, I do not think but in to-morrow's judgment
The terror will sit closer to your soul,
When the dread thought of death remembers you;
To further which, take this sad voice from me:
Never was act played more unnaturally.
Hus. I thank you, sir.
Kni. Go, lead him to the gaol:
Where justice claims all, there must pity fail.
Hus. Come, come, away with me!
[*Exit prisoner, in custody.*
Mast. Sir, you deserve the worship of your place.
Would all did so: in you the law is grace.
Kni. It is my wish it should be so.—Ruinous man,
The desolation of his house, the blot
Upon his predecessors' honored name!
That man is nearest shame that is past shame.
[*Exit.*

Scene X

As the Husband *is being taken to prison, he is brought past his own home. Besides the officers, the* Master of the College *and* Gentlemen *are with him.*

Hus. I am right against my house, seat of my ancestors: I hear my wife's alive; but much endangered. Let me entreat to speak with her, before the prison gripe me.

Enter his Wife, *brought in a chair.*

Gent. See, here she comes of herself.
Wife. Oh, my sweet husband, my dear distressed husband,
Now in the hands of unrelenting laws!
My greatest sorrow, my extremest bleeding!

[7] Qy, extirpent.

Now my soul bleeds.
HUS. How now? kind to me? did I not
wound thee, left thee for dead?
WIFE. Tut, far greater wounds did my
breast feel:
Unkindness strikes a deeper wound than
steel;
You have been still unkind to me.
HUS. Faith, and so I think I have:
I did my murthers roughly, out of hand,
Desperate and sudden, but thou hast
devised
A fine way now to kill me, thou hast
given mine eyes
Seven wounds apiece! Now glides the
devil from me,
Departs at every joint, heaves up my
nails.
Oh, catch him, new torments, that were
ne'er invented,
Bind him one thousand more, you blessed
angels,
In that pit bottomless; let him not rise
To make men act unnatural tragedies,
To spread into a father, and, in fury,
Make him his children's executioner,
Murder his wife, his servants, and who
not?
For that man's dark, where heaven is
quite forgot.
WIFE. Oh, my repentant husband!
HUS. My dear soul, whom I too much
have wronged,
For death I die, and for this have I
longed.
WIFE. Thou shouldst not (be assured)
for these faults die,
If the law could forgive as soon as I.
HUS. What sight is yonder?
[*The bodies of the murdered children are
laid out in front of the house.*]
WIFE. Oh, our two bleeding boys
Laid forth upon the threshold.
HUS. Here's weight enough to make
a heart-string crack.
Oh, were it lawful that your pretty souls
Might look from heaven into your
father's eyes,
Then should you see the penitent glasses
melt
And both your murthers shoot upon my
cheeks;
But you are playing in the angels' laps,
And will not look on me,
Who, void of grace, killed you in beggary.
Oh that I might my wishes now attain,
I should then wish you living were again,
Though I did beg with you, which thing
I feared:
Oh, 'twas the enemy my eyes so bleared.
Oh, would you could pray heaven me to
forgive,
That will unto my end repentant live!
WIFE. It makes me e'en forget all other
sorrows
And live apart with this.
OFFICER. Come, will you go?
HUS. I'll kiss the blood I spilled and
then I go:
My soul is bloodied; well may my lips be
so.
Farewell, dear wife, now thou and I must
part;
I of thy wrongs repent me with my heart.
WIFE. Oh stay, thou shalt not go.
HUS. That's but in vain, you see it
must be so.
Farewell, ye bloody ashes of my boys!
My punishments are their eternal joys.
Let every father look into my deeds,
And then their heirs may prosper, while
mine bleeds.
[*Exeunt* HUSBAND *and* MEN *with hal-
berds.*
WIFE. More wretched am I now in this
distress,
Than former sorrows made me.
MAST. Oh, kind wife,
Be comforted. One joy is yet unmur-
dered:
You have a boy at nurse; your joy's in
him.
WIFE. Dearer than all is my poor hus-
band's life:
Heaven give my body strength, which yet
is faint
With much expense of blood; and I will
kneel,
Sue for his life, number up all my friends,
To plead for pardon [for] my dear hus-
band's life.

MAST. Was it in man to wound so kind a creature? [119
I'll ever praise a woman for thy sake.
I must return with grief; my answer's set:
I shall bring news weighs heavier than the debt.—
Two brothers: one in bond lies overthrown,
This on a deadlier execution.

MACBETH

BY

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

INTRODUCTION

Whether or not "Macbeth" is to be regarded as the greatest of all Shakespeare's plays, it is assuredly the one in which the element of suspense is most masterfully employed. Whether in that respect it has any rival in the whole field of drama may well be doubted. Psychologically too, it stands in the very first rank; and pathologically it is supreme. As a piece of literature it is inferior to both "Hamlet" and "Othello." In view of its marvellous literary excellence, such a thing can be said only with reserve and reluctance; but the fact remains that in places the writing seems to be a trifle careless, the result probably of haste. If the tragedy was written to order, with speed as the first essential, we have a quite sufficient explanation of the circumstance.

Not only is there evident a certain amount of carelessness, but also it seems likely that there has been some interpolation. Hecate's speeches in III 5 and IV 1 are entirely out of keeping with the rest of the play: she talks of the witches "trading and trafficking," speaks of the gains, in which she declares that everyone is to share, alludes to their having lured Macbeth into love, and, after saying what she is going to do to "draw him on to his confusion," does just nothing at all. All this not only conflicts with the facts, but is in opposition to the spirit of the general conception of the actions of the witches; and, when it is added that III 5 and the Hecate part of IV 1 are in iambics, while Shakespeare wrote his witch scenes in trochees, we find enough reason to believe that we have here work interpolated by someone other than Shakespeare, presumably after his retirement from the stage. It has, in fact, been lifted, with alterations, from Middleton's "Witch," a play almost certainly of later date than "Macbeth." As if to make the fact indubitable, the two songs named in the two scenes mentioned are both given in full in "The Witch," in which Hecate takes the predominant place that we are asked to concede to her in these two scenes of "Macbeth," though in the other witch scenes she is not present at all. She also brings with her in IV 1 three other witches, apparently for no other purpose than to add to the effectiveness of the introduced song and dance. Another very obvious interpolation in the same scene follows the disappearance of the ghost of Banquo and the apparitions of his crowned descendants. Macbeth prefaces it with a feeble "What,

is this so?" and there follow eight lines spoken by the First Witch, not in her usual trochees, but in iambic tetrameters—lines which bear every indication of not being Shakespeare's. And then we have Macbeth remaining silent while the witches perform another dance. It is, in truth, an interpolation by someone who utterly failed to catch the Shakespearean spirit.

These are not the only passages whose authorship has been questioned. The lengthy allusion in IV 3 to the royal treatment for the king's evil has been declared to be an interpolation; and indeed the whole passage between the Doctor's entry and Ross's may be detached from the play without hurt to it; but it is entirely Shakespearean in style. Coleridge pronounced the Porter's speeches in II 3 to be by another than Shakespeare—a truly amazing opinion, for they are most markedly in Shakespeare's manner, and, moreover, serve a splendid dramatic purpose. From the purely dramatic point of view, there is probably nothing finer anywhere than the suspense and horror of the two preceding scenes, the terrifying mystery of the knocking at the gate, and the contrast afforded by the comedy of the drunken porter. No; whatever is to be suspected, that assuredly must not be. The final couplet in V 3 may, however, well be regarded with suspicion; and, a matter of much more importance, so may I 2. If the verse of that be Shakespeare's, then Shakespeare must have been at work on the play much earlier than is generally supposed. Some of it seems to be his; but some of it looks as if it never could have been his, and as if it is of pretty early date. That is to say, we do not appear to have here a matter of interpolation, but rather a matter of survival, and that constitutes a puzzling circumstance. The story told there is inconsistent with that told in I 3: in the one scene, Ross tells about Cawdor's treason; in the other, he is ignorant of it; and in the latter, Macbeth does not seem to know that Cawdor has played a traitor's part. This leads to a consideration of the date of the play's production.

"Macbeth" was first published in the folio. Dr. Simon Forman is said, on the strength of what purports to be extracts from his MS diary, to have seen it acted at the Globe in April, 1610; but, even if that document be genuine, its importance is not great for an attempt to ascertain the date of the first production. We have a clear reference to Banquo's ghost in "The Puritan," published in 1607. The latest possible date is, then, 1607, and the year usually favored is 1606. In II 3 there is a very marked allusion to the doctrine of equivocation, as avowed by the head of the Jesuit order in England at his trial in connection with the Gunpowder Plot, March, 1605-6. The mention of the expectation of plenty also fits the summer and autumn of 1606; and the reference to fashions in the same speech is said to point to the

same year. All these may, however, have been insertions after the original production. It is generally assumed that the play must have been later than the accession of James; but, though that is probable, it is not absolutely certain. A company which included Laurence Fletcher of the Chamberlain's men visited Aberdeen in October, 1601. It may be that visit which led to the writing of the play; but there is also a contrary possibility that the play may have been written for the company to take with them then, in the knowledge that a play dealing with an event in Scottish history would be particularly attractive. If we accept that theory, Shakespeare's first handling of the subject may be dated 1601; but then arises the question whether there was not an earlier play on the subject? In this connection, we must not overlook Kemp's statement in his "Nine Days' Wonder," 1600, as to a young man, "all hart to the heel" (which suggests a joking reference to the youth's name, which should be Hart), "a penny poet, whose first making was the miserable stolen story of Macdoel or Macdobeth or Macsomewhat," which, he adds, he has "never had the maw to see." This recalls the fact that Collier records that in August, 1596, Thomas Millington was fined for printing "a ballad entitled the Taming of a Shrew," contrary to order, the entry in the Stationers' Register adding the words "also one other ballad of Macdobeth." If the play "The Taming of a Shrew" was described as a ballad, why should not this "Ballad of Macdobeth" also have been a play? But, alas! the story of this entry seems to be one of Collier's fakes. As for the Kemp reference, the conjunction of Macdoel with Macdobeth suggests a reminiscence of "Piers Plowman;" but that does not preclude the possibility of its being an allusion to an early play of "Macbeth."

To sum up, we may take it for certain that "Macbeth" was either written or rewritten about the middle of 1606, and regard it as practically certain that interpolations were made in it after Shakespeare's retirement. Beyond that, all is surmise: Shakespeare's work may all have been done in 1606, while there may or may not have been an early foundational play; or Shakespeare's original work may belong to 1600, with topical interpolations in 1606. The discrepancies between I 2 and I 3 point in the direction of a version prior to 1606; and, even if we grant to this early work a non-Shakespearean origin, it is still by no means certain that the main work of Shakespeare may not have been done in 1600. If we treat it here as belonging to 1606, it is because that date is sure for at least part of the writing, while the date of the probable early writing is a matter of nothing better than surmise; and because also it seems likely that the *bulk* of the work was done in 1606. The source of the play is the 1587 edition of Holinshed's "Chronicle."

Two or three minor matters may be referred to. At first Lady Macbeth plans to do the murder herself; and then, without our being shown how a change of plan has been arrived at, we find that Macbeth is to do it. Can it be that a scene has dropped out, or did Shakespeare alter his mind as to the conduct of the tragedy? It is also a matter for wonderment what is the purpose of the introduction of the third murderer of Banquo, especially as his advent is not prepared for. There may have been some explanation of the circumstance in the play as it was at first written. It is not improbable that, when the late interpolations to which attention has been directed were made, one or two scenes were cut out to make way for them. To-day we should regard such action as sacrilege; it was not so regarded then.

CHARACTERS

DUNCAN, *King of Scotland.*
MALCOLM } *his Sons.*
DONALBAIN }
MACBETH } *Generals of the King's Army.*
BANQUO }
MACDUFF }
LENNOX }
ROSS } *Noblemen of Scotland.*
MENTEITH }
ANGUS }
CAITHNESS }
FLEANCE, *Son to Banquo.*
SEYWARD, *Earl of Northumberland.*
YOUNG SEYWARD, *his Son.*
SEYTON, *an Officer attending Macbeth.*

BOY, *Son to Macduff.*
LADY MACBETH.
LADY MACDUFF.
An English Doctor.
A Scotch Doctor.
A Sergeant.
A Porter.
An Old Man.
HECATE and Three Witches.
Gentlewomen attending on Lady Macbeth.
Lords, Gentlemen, Officers, Soldiers, Murderers, Attendants, and Messengers. The Ghost of Banquo, and other Apparitions.

PLACE: *Scotland; England.*

TIME: *Eleventh Century.*

ACT ONE

SCENE I

A fearful storm of thunder and lightning is raging on a barren Scottish heath. Out of the darkness three WITCHES *emerge.*

1 WITCH. When shall we three meet again
In thunder, lightning, and[1] in rain?
2 WITCH. When the hurlybury's done,
When the battle's lost and won.
3 WITCH. That will be ere the set [10
of sun.
1 WITCH. Where the place?
2 WITCH. Upon the heath.
3 WITCH. Thĕre to meet with Macbeth.
1 WITCH. I come, Graymalkin!
2 WITCH. Paddock calls.
3 WITCH. Anon.
ALL. Fair is foul, and foul is fair:
Hover through the fog and filthy air. [120
[*They vanish.*

SCENE II

A rebellion has broken out against DUNCAN, *the Scottish King, who, with his two sons and* LENNOX, *is anxiously awaiting news from his generals,* MACBETH *and* BANQUO.

A wounded and travel-weary SERGEANT *enters.*

DUN. What bloody man is that? He
can report, [9
As seemeth by his plight, of the revolt
The newest state.
MAL. This is the sergeant
Who, like a good and hardy soldier, fought
'Gainst my captivity. Hail, brave friend!
Say to the king the knowledge of the
broil
As thou didst leave it.

SERG. Doubtful it stood,
As two spent swimmers, that do cling
together [20
And choke their art. The merciless
Macdonwald—
Worthy to be a rebel, for to that
The multiplying villanies of nature
Do swarm upon him—from the western
isles
Of kerns and gallowglasses[2] is supplied;
And fortune, on his damnëd quarry smiling,
Showed like a rebel's whore; but all's too
weak; [31
For brave Macbeth—well he deserves
that name—
Disdaining fortune, with his brandished
steel,
Which smoked with bloody execution,
Like valor's minion[3] carved out his passage
Till he faced the slave;
Which ne'er shook hands, nor bade farewell to him, [41
Till he unseamed him from the nave[4] to
th' chaps,
And fixed his head upon our battlements.
DUN. O valiant cousin! worthy gentleman!
SERG. As whence the sun gins his reflection
Shipwracking storms and direful [50
thunders break,
So from that spring whence comfort
seemed to come
Discomfort swells. Mark, King of Scotland, mark:
No sooner justice had, with valor armed,
Compelled these skipping kerns to trust
their heels,

[1] B, or.

[2] light-armed and heavy-armed troops.
[3] darling.
[4] navel.

But the Norweyan lord, surveying vantage,[5]
With furbished arms and new supplies of men
Began a fresh assault.
DUN. Dismayed not this
Our captains,[6] Macbeth and Banquo?
SERG. Yes;
As sparrows eagles, or the hare the lion.
If I say sooth, I must report they were
As cannons overcharged with double cracks; [7]
So they
Doubly redoubled strokes upon the foe:
Except they meant to bathe in reeking wounds,
Or memorize [8] another Gólgotha,
I cannot tell—[*breaks off, his overtaxed strength giving way*
But I am faint; my gashes cry for help.
DUN. So well thy words become thee as thy wounds;
They smack of honor both.—Go, get him surgeons. [*Exit* SERGEANT, *attended.*
Who comes here?

Enter Ross.

MAL. The worthy Thane of Ross.
LEN. <What a haste looks through his eyes! So should he look
That seems to speak things strange.>
ROSS. God save the king!
DUN. Whence cam'st thou, worthy thane?
ROSS. From Fife, great king,
Where the Norweyan banners flout the sky
And fan our people cold. Norway himself,
With terrible numbers,
Assisted by that most disloyal traitor,
The Thane of Cawdor, began a dismal conflict,
Till that Bellona's bridegroom, lapped in proof,
Confronted him with self-comparisons,
Point against point rebellious, arm 'gainst arm,
Curbing his lavish [9] spirit: and, to conclude,
The victory fell on us.
DUN. Great happiness!
ROSS. That now
Sweno, the Norways' king, craves composition;
Nor would we deign him burial of his men
Till he disbursëd, at Saint Colme's inch,[10]
Ten thousand dollars to our general use.
DUN. No more that Thane of Cawdor shall deceive
Our bosom interest.[11]—Go, pronounce his present [12] death,
And with his former title greet Macbeth.
ROSS. I'll see it done.
DUN. What he hath lost noble Macbeth hath won.

SCENE III

It is a day of alternate thunderstorm and sunshine. The three WITCHES *are again met on the heath.*

1 WITCH. Where hast thou been, sister?
2 WITCH. Killing swine.
3 WITCH. Sister, where thou?
1 WITCH. A sailor's wife had chestnuts in her lap,
And munched, and munched, and munched: "Give me," quoth I:
"Aroint [13] thee, witch!" the rump-fed ronyon [14] cries.
Her husband's to Aleppo gone, master o' th' *Tiger:*
But in a sieve I'll thither sail,
And, like a rat without a tail,
I'll do, I'll do, and I'll do.
2 WITCH. I'll give thee a wind.
1 WITCH. Th'art kind.
3 WITCH. And I another.
1 WITCH. I myself have all the other;
And the very ports they blow,[15]
All the quarters that they know
I' th' shipman's card.

5 perceiving his opportunity.
6 pronounced as if "capitains."
7 charges.
8 make memorable.
9 insolent.
10 the island of St. Columba or Colum, now known as Inchcolm.
11 deep affection.
12 instant.
13 away with.
14 foul skinned woman.
15 blow to.

I'll drain him dry as hay:
Sleep shall neither night nor day
Hang upon his pent-house lid;
He shall live a man forbid.
Weary se'nights nine times nine [30
Shall he dwindle, peak and pine:
Though his bark cannot be lost,
Yet it shall be tempest-tossed.
Look what I have.

2 WITCH. Show me, show me.

1 WITCH. Here I have a pilot's thumb,
Wracked as homeward he did come.
[*Drum within.*

3 WITCH. A drum! a drum! [39
Macbeth doth come. [*The three join hands, and dance and chant their incantation.*

ALL. The weyward[16] sisters, hand in hand,
Posters[17] of the sea and land,
Thus do go about, about:
Thrice to thine, and thrice to mine,
And thrice again, to make up nine.
Peace! the charm's wound up. [*Seem to melt away.* [50

Enter MACBETH *and* BANQUO.

MACB. So foul and fair a day I have not seen.

BAN. How far is't called to Forres? [*The* WITCHES *become visible again.*] What are these,
So withered and so wild in their attire,
That look not like th' inhabitants o' th' earth,
And yet are on't? Live you? or are [60
you aught
That man may question? You seem to understand me,
By each at once her choppy finger laying
Upon her skinny lips: you should be women,
And yet your beards forbid me to interpret
That you are so.

MACB. Speak, if you can: what are you? [70

1 WITCH. All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, Thane of Glamis![18]

2 WITCH. All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, Thane of Cawdor!

3 WITCH. All hail, Macbeth! that shalt be king hereafter.

BAN. Good sir, why do you start, and seem to fear
Things that do sound so fair?—I' th' name of truth, [80
Are ye fantastical,[19] or that indeed
Which outwardly ye show? My noble partner
You greet with present grace and great prediction
Of noble having and of royal hope,
That he seems rapt withal: to me you speak not.
If you can look into the seeds of time,
And say which grain will grow and which will not, [91
Speak then to me, who neither beg nor fear
Your favors nor your hate.

1 WITCH. Hail!

2 WITCH. Hail!

3 WITCH. Hail!

1 WITCH. Lesser than Macbeth, and greater.

2 WITCH. Not so happy,[20] yet much happier. [101

3 WITCH. Thou shalt get kings, though thou be none:
So, all hail, Macbeth and Banquo!

1 WITCH. Banquo and Macbeth, all hail!

MACB. Stay, you imperfect speakers, tell me more:
By Sinel's death I know I am Thane of Glamis; [110
But how of Cawdor? the Thane of Cawdor lives,
A prosperous gentleman; and to be king
Stands not within the prospect of belief—
No more than to be Cawdor. Say, from whence
You owe[21] this strange intelligence? or why

[16] Editors generally use Holinshed's word, "weird"; but the folio word is invariably "weyward" or "wey'ard."
[17] rapid travellers.
[18] pronounced "Glahms."
[19] creatures of the imagination.
[20] fortunate.
[21] have.

Upon this blasted heath you stop our way [120
With such prophetic greeting? Speak, I charge you. [*The* WITCHES *vanish.*
BAN. The earth hath bubbles, as the water has,
And these are of them. Whither are they vanished?
MACB. Into the air, and what seemed corporal melted
As breath into the wind. Would they had stayed! [130
BAN. Were such things here as we do speak about?
Or have we eaten on the insane root
That takes the reason prisoner?
MACB. Your children shall be kings.
BAN. You shall be king.
MACB., *laughing.* And [*imitating the* WITCH] "Thane of Cawdor" too; went it not so?
BAN. To th' self-same tune and words. —Who's here? [141

Enter ROSS *and* ANGUS.

ROSS. The king hath happily received, Macbeth,
The news of thy success; and, when he reads
Thy personal venture in the rebels' fight,
His wonders and his praises do contend
Which should be thine or his. Silenced with that, [150
In viewing o'er the rest o' th' self-same day,
He finds thee in the stout Norweyan ranks,
Nothing afeard of what thyself didst make—
Strange images of death. As thick as tale[22]
Came[23] post with post, and every one did bear [160
Thy praises in his kingdom's great defence,
And poured them down before him.
ANG. We are sent
To give thee from our royal master thanks;
Only to herald thee into his sight,
Not pay thee.
ROSS. And, for an earnest of a greater honor, [170
He bade me, from him, call thee Thane of Cawdor:
In which addition, hail, most worthy thane!
For it is thine.
BAN., *startled at the prompt fulfilment of the prophecy.* <What! can the devil speak true?>
MACB. The Thane of Cawdor lives: why do you dress me [180
In borrowed robes?
ANG. Who was the thane lives yet;
But under heavy judgment bears that life
Which he deserves to lose. Whether he was combined
With those of Norway, or did line[24] the rebel
With hidden help or vantage, or that with both [190
He labored in his country's wrack, I know not;
But treasons capital, confessed and proved,
Have overthrown him.
MACB., *startled too, but with his ambitions aroused.* <Glamis, and Thane of Cawdor: [198
The greatest is behind.> [*To* ROSS *and* ANGUS.] Thanks for your pains.
[*To* BANQUO.] Do you not hope your children shall be kings,
When those that gave the Thane of Cawdor to me
Promised no less to them?
BAN. That, trusted home,
Might yet enkindle you unto the crown,
Besides the Thane of Cawdor; but 'tis strange; [209
And oftentimes, to win us to our harm,
The instruments of darkness tell us truths,
Win us with honest trifles, to betray's
In deepest consequence.—
Cousins,[25] a word, I pray you. [*Steps aside with* ROSS *and* ANGUS.

[22] as fast as can be counted.
[23] B, can.
[24] aid.
[25] kinsmen.

MACB. <Two truths are told,
As happy prologues to the swelling act
Of the imperial theme.> [*Scarcely aware that he is addressing the others.*]
I thank you, gentlemen. [221
<This supernatural soliciting [26]
Cannot be ill, cannot be good; if ill,
Why hath it given me earnest of success,
Commencing in a truth? I am Thane of Cawdor:
If good, why do I yield to that suggestion
Whose horrid image doth unfix my hair
And make my seated heart knock at my ribs, [230
Against the use of nature? Present fears
Are less than horrible imaginings;
My thought, whose murder yet is but fantastical,
Shakes so my single state of man that function
Is smothered in surmise, and nothing is
But what is not.>
BAN. Look how our partner's rapt.
MACB. <If chance will have me king, why, chance may crown me, [241
Without my stir.>
BAN. New honors come upon him,
Like our strange garments, cleave not to their mould
But with the aid of use.
MACB. <Come what come may,
Time and the hour runs through the roughest day.>
BAN. Worthy Macbeth, we stay upon your leisure. [251
MACB., *awaking from his day-dream.* Give me your favor: [27] my dull brain was wrought [28]
With things forgotten.—Kind gentlemen, your pains
Are registered where every day I turn
The leaf to read them. Let us toward the king. [259
[*To* BANQUO.] Think upon what hath chanced; and, at more time,
The interim having weighed it, let us speak
Our free hearts each to other.
BAN. Very gladly.

[26] incitement.
[27] pardon me.
[28] troubled.

MACB. Till then, enough.—Come, friends. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV

In the royal palace at Forres, DUNCAN *is attended by* MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, LENNOX, *and Lords.*

DUN. Is execution done on Cawdor? Are not
Those in commission yet returned?
MAL. My liege,
They are not yet come back; but I have spoke
With one that saw him die, who did report [11
That very frankly he confessed his treasons,
Implored your highness' pardon, and set forth
A deep repentance. Nothing in his life
Became him like the leaving it; he died
As one that had been studied in his death
To throw away the dearest thing he [20
owed,
As 'twere a careless trifle.
DUN. There's no art
To find the mind's construction in the face:
He was a gentleman on whom I built
An absolute trust.

Enter MACBETH, BANQUO, ROSS *and* ANGUS.

O worthiest cousin! [30
The sin of my ingratitude even now
Was heavy on me. Thou art so far before
That swiftest wing of recompense is slow
To overtake thee; would thou hadst less deserved,
That the proportion both of thanks and payment
Might have been mine! only I have left to say, [40
More is thy due than more than all can pay.
MACB. The service and the loyalty I owe,
In doing it, pays itself. Your highness' part

Is to receive our duties: and our duties
Are, to your throne and state, children and servants,
Which do but what they should by doing everything [51
Safe toward your love and honor.
DUN. Welcome hither:
I have begun to plant thee, and will labor
To make thee full of growing.—Noble Banquo,
That hast no less deserved, nor must be known
No less to have done so, let me enfold thee [61
And hold thee to my heart.
BAN. There if I grow,
The harvest is your own.
DUN. My plenteous joys
Wanton in fulness, seek to hide themselves
In drops of sorrow.—Sons, kinsmen, thanes, [69
And you whose places are the nearest, know
We will establish our estate upon
Our eldest, Malcolm, whom we name hereafter
The Prince of Cumberland; which honor must
Not unaccompanied invest him only,
But signs of nobleness, like stars, shall shine
On all deservers.—From hence to In- [80
verness,
And bind us further to you.
MACB. The rest is labor, which is not used for you:
I'll be myself the harbinger, and make joyful
The hearing of my wife with your approach,
So humbly take my leave.
DUN. My worthy Cawdor! [90
MACB., *while* BANQUO *talks to* DUNCAN. <The Prince of Cumberland! that is a step
On which I must fall down, or else o'erleap,
For in my way it lies. Stars, hide your fires!
Let not light see my black and deep desires;
The eye wink at the hand; yet let [100
that be
Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see.> [*Exit.*
DUN. True, worthy Banquo; he is full so valiant;
And in his commendations I am fed:
It is a banquet to me. Let's after him,
Whose care is gone before to bid us welcome:
It is a peerless kinsman. [110
[*All go out, to the accompaniment of a flourish of trumpets.*]

SCENE V

At MACBETH'S *castle at Inverness,* LADY MACBETH *is reading a letter she has received from her husband.*

"They met me in the day of success; and I have learned, by the perfectest report, they have more in them than mortal knowledge. When I burned in desire to question them further, they made themselves air, into which they vanished. Whiles I stood rapt in the wonder of it, [10
came missives[29] from the king, who all-hailed me Thane of Cawdor, by which title, before, these weyward sisters saluted me, and referred me to the coming on of time, with, 'Hail, king that shalt be!' This have I thought good to deliver thee, my dearest partner of greatness, that thou mightst not lose the dues of rejoicing, by being ignorant of what greatness is promised thee. Lay it to thy heart, and farewell." [21
Glamis thou art, and Cawdor; and shalt be
What thou art promised. Yet do I fear thy nature;
It is too full o' th' milk of human kindness
To catch the nearest way; thou wouldst be great, [29
Art not without ambition, but without
The illness should attend it; what thou wouldst highly,

[29] messengers.

That thou wouldst holily; wouldst not play false,
And yet wouldst wrongly win; thou'dst have, great Glamis,
That which cries, "Thus thou must do, if thou have it!"
And that which rather thou dost fear to do [40
Than wishest should be undone. Hie thee hither,
That I may pour my spirits in thine ear,
And chastise with the valor of my tongue
All that impedes thee from the golden round,
Which fate and metaphysical aid doth seem
To have thee crowned withal. [49

Enter a MESSENGER.

What is your tidings?

MESS. The king comes here to-night.

LADY M., *believing the news too good to be true.* Thou'rt mad to say it.
Is not thy master with him? who, were't so,
Would have informed for preparatiön.

MESS. So please you, it is true: our thane is coming; [59
One of my fellows had the speed of him,
Who, almost dead for breath, had scarcely more
Than would make up his message.

LADY M. Give him tending;
He brings great news.—[*Exit* MESSENGER.] The raven himself is hoarse
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
Under my battlements.—Come, you spirits
That tend on mortal thoughts! unsex me here, [70
And fill me from the crown to th' toe topfull
Of direst cruelty; make thick my blood,
Stop up th' access and passage to remorse,
That no compunctious visitings of nature
Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between
Th' effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts, [80
And take my milk for[30] gall, you murd'ring ministers,

[30] turn my milk to.

Wherever in your sightless[31] substances
You wait on nature's mischief! Come, thick night,
And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark, [91
To cry, "Hold, hold!"

Enter MACBETH.

Great Glamis! worthy Cawdor!
Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter!
Thy letters have transported me beyond
This ignorant present, and I feël now
The future in the instant. [99

MACB. My dearest love!
Duncan comes here to-night.

LADY M. And when goes hence?

MACB. To-morrow as he purposes.

LADY M. O! never
Shall sun that morrow see.
Your face, my thane, is as a book where men
May read strange matters. To beguile the time,[32]
Look like the time; bear welcome in your eye, [111
Your hand, your tongue: look like the innocent flower,
But be the serpent under't. He that's coming
Must be provided for; and you shall put
This night's great business into my dispatch;
Which shall to all our nights and days to come [120
Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom.

MACB. We will speak further.

LADY M. Only look up clear;
To alter favor ever is to fear.
Leave all the rest to me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI

DUNCAN, MALCOLM, DONALBAIN, BANQUO, LENNOX, MACDUFF, ROSS, *and* ANGUS *have arrived before the castle. It is night,*

[31] invisible.
[32] to deceive the world.

and there are Attendants carrying torches. Hautboys sound.

DUN. This castle hath a pleasant seat; the air
Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself
Unto our gentle senses. [9
BAN. This guest of summer,
The temple-haunting martlet, does approve
By his loved mansionry that the heaven's breath
Smells wooingly here: no jutty, frieze,
Buttress, nor coign of vantage, but this bird
Hath made his pendent bed and procreant cradle:
Where they most breed and haunt, I have observed, [21
The air is delicate.

Enter LADY MACBETH *from the castle.*

DUN. See, see, our honored hostess!
The love that follows us sometime is our trouble,
Which still we thank as love. Herein I teach you
How you shall bid God yelde[33] us for your pains [30
And thank us for your trouble.
LADY M. All our service,
In every point twice done, and then done double,
Were poor and single[34] business, to contend
Against those honors deep and broad wherewith
Your majesty loads our house: for those of old, [40
And the late dignities heaped up to them,
We rest your hermits.
DUN. Where's the Thane of Cawdor?
We coursed him at the heels, and had a purpose
To be his púrveyor; but he rides well,
And his great love, sharp as his spur, hath holp him
To his home before us. Fair and noble hostess, [50
We are your guest to-night.
LADY M. Your servants ever
Have theirs, themselves, and what is theirs, in compt,
To make their audit at your highness' pleasure,
Still to return your own.
DUN. Give me your hand;
Conduct me to mine host: we love him highly, [60
And shall continue our graces towards him.
By your leave, hostess. [*All enter the castle, the* KING *and* LADY MACBETH *leading the way.*

SCENE VII

It is a torch-lit hall in the castle with a Sewer and Servants passing to and fro with dishes and service. Hautboys are sounding.

MACBETH *enters, the victim of a struggle between conscience and ambition.*

MACB. If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly; if th' assassination
Could trammel up[35] the consequence, and catch [11
With his surcease success, that but this blow
Might be the be-all, and the end-all here,
But here, upon this bank and shoal of time,
We'd jump the life to come; but in these cases
We still have judgment here; that we but teach [20
Bloody instructions, which, being taught, return
To plague th' inventor. This even-handed justice
Commends th' ingredients of our poisoned chalice
To our own lips. He's here in double trust:
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject, [30
Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,
Who should against his murderer shut the door,
Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan

[33] reward. [34] trivial.

[35] catch in a net.

Hath borne his faculties[36] so meek, hath been
So clear in his great office, that his virtues
Will plead, like angels, trumpet-tongued against
The deep damnation of his taking-off;
And pity, like a naked new-born babe,
Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubin, horsed
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,
That tears shall drown the wind. I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition, which o'er-leaps itself
And falls on th' other.—

Enter LADY MACBETH.

How now! what news?

LADY M. He has almost supped: why have you left the chamber?

MACB. Hath he asked for me?

LADY M. Know you not he has?

MACB. We will proceed no further in this business:
He hath honored me of late; and I have bought
Golden opinions from all sorts of people,
Which would be worn now in their newest gloss,
Not cast aside so soon.

LADY M. Was the hope drunk,
Wherein you dressed yourself? hath it slept since,
And wakes it now, to look so green and pale
At what it did so freely? From this time
Such I account thy love. Art thou afeard
To be the same in thine own act and valor
As thou art in desire? Wouldst thou have that
Which thou esteem'st the ornament of life,
And live a coward in thine own esteem,
Letting "I dare not" wait upon "I would,"
Like the poor cat i' th' adage?

[36] authority.

MACB. Prithee, peace.
I dare do all that may become a man;
Who dares do more is none.

LADY M. What beast was't, then,
That made you break this enterprise to me?
When you durst do it, then you were a man;
And, to be more than what you were, you would
Be so much more the man. Nor time nor place
Did then adhere, and yet you would make both:
They have made themselves, and that their fitness now
Does unmake you. I have given suck, and know
How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me:
I would, while it was smiling in my face,
Have plucked my nipple from his boneless gums,
And dashed the brains out, had I so sworn as you
Have done to this.

MACB. If we should fail—

LADY M. We fail?
But screw your courage to the sticking-place,
And we'll not fail. When Duncan is asleep—
Whereto the rather shall his day's hard journey
Soundly invite him—his two chamberlains
Will I with wine and wassail so convince
That memory, the warder of the brain,
Shall be a fume, and the receipt[37] of reason
A limbeck only; when in swinish sleep
Their drenchèd natures lie, as in a death,
What cannot you and I perform upon
Th' unguarded Duncan? what not put upon
His spongy[38] officers, who shall bear the guilt
Of our great quell?[39]

MACB. Bring forth men-children only;
For thy undaunted mettle should compose

[37] receptacle.
[38] drunken.
[39] killing.

Nothing but males. Will it not be received,
When we have marked with blood those sleepy two
Of his own chamber and used their very daggers,
That they have done't?

LADY M. Who dares receive it other,
As we shall make our griefs and clamor roar
Upon his death?

MACB. I am settled, and bend up
Each corporal agent to this terrible feat.
Away, and mock the time with fairest show:
False face must hide what the false heart doth know. [*Exeunt.*

ACT TWO

SCENE I

A Servant[1] *bearing a torch, enters the courtyard of the castle a little after midnight, followed by* BANQUO *and* FLEANCE.

BAN. How goes the night, boy?

FLE. The moon is down; I have not heard the clock.

BAN. And she goes down at twelve.

FLE. I take't, 'tis later, sir.

BAN. Hold, take my sword. There's husbandry in heaven;
Their candles are all out. Take thee that too. [*Indicates the torch, and waves the Servant away.* FLEANCE *takes the torch, and the Servant departs.*
A heavy summons lies like lead upon me,
And yet I would not sleep: merciful powers!
Restrain in me the cursëd thoughts that nature
Gives way to in repose.

Enter MACBETH, *and a Servant with a torch.*

Give me my sword.—
Who's there?

MACB. A friend.

BAN. What, sir! not yet at rest? The king's a-bed:
He hath been in unusual pleasure, and
Sent forth great largess to your offices.
This diamond he greets your wife withal,
By the name of most kind hostess; and shut up
In measureless content.

MACB. Being unprepared,
Our will became the servant to defect,
Which else should free have wrought.

BAN. All's well.
I dreamt last night of the three weyward sisters:
To you they have showed some truth.

MACB. I think not of them;
Yet, when we can entreat an hour to serve,
We would spend it in some words upon that business,
If you would grant the time.

BAN. At your kind'st leisure.

MACB. If you shall cleave to my consent, when 'tis,
It shall make honor for you.

BAN. So I lose none
In seeking to augment it, but still keep
My bosom franchised and allegiance clear,
I shall be counselled.

MACB. Good repose the while!

BAN. Thanks, sir: the like to you.
[*Exeunt* BANQUO *and* FLEANCE.

MACB. Go bid thy mistress, when my drink is ready,
She strike upon the bell. Get thee to bed. [*Exit Servant. The excitement under which* MACBETH *is laboring begins to play upon his imagination.*
Is this a dagger which I see before me,
The handle toward my hand? [*Reaches out for the vision.*] Come, let me clutch thee. [*To his consternation, grasps only air.*
I have thee not; and yet I see thee still.
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible
To feeling as to sight? or art thou but
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppressëd brain?

[1] It is not quite certain that Fleance is not himself the torchbearer, in which case there is no servant and it is hard to say to what Banquo refers when he says, in line 5, "Take thee that too."

[*Drawing his own dagger.*] I see thee yet, in form as palpable
As this which now I draw.
Thou marshall'st me the way that I was going; [81
And such an instrument I was to use.
Mine eyes are made the fools o' th' other senses,
Or else worth all the rest.—I see thee still,
And on thy blade and dudgeon gouts of blood,
Which was not so before.—There's no such thing: [90
It is the bloody business which informs [2]
Thus to mine eyes. Now o'er the one half world
Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse [3]
The curtained sleep; witchcraft celebrates
Pale Hecate's offerings; and withered murder,
Alarumed by his sentinel, the wolf—
Who [4] howls his watch thus—with his stealthy pace, [101
With Tarquin's ravishing strides,[5] toward his design
Moves like a ghost. Thou sure and firm-set earth,
Hear not my steps, which way they walk, for fear
Thy very stones prate of my whereabout,
And take the present horror from the time, [110
Which now suits with it. Whiles I threat, he lives:
Words to the heat of deeds too cold breath gives. [*A bell rings.*
I go, and it is done; the bell invites me.
Hear it not, Duncan; for it is a knell
That summons thee to heaven or to hell. [*Exit.*

Scene II

A few moments later, Lady Macbeth *enters a room in the castle.*

Lady M. That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold;
What hath quenched them hath given me fire. [*The hooting of an owl is heard.*] Hark!—Peace!
It was the owl that shrieked, the fatal bellman,
Which gives the stern'st good-night. [10
—He is about it:
The doors are open, and the surfeited grooms
Do mock their charge with snores: I have drugged their possets,
That death and nature do contend about them,
Whether they live or die. [18

Macb., *within.* Who's there? what, ho!

Lady M. Alack! I am afraid they have awaked,
And 'tis not done. Th' attempt and not the deed
Confounds us. Hark! I laid their daggers ready;
He could not miss 'em. Had he not resembled
My father as he slept, I had done't.—My husband! [29

Macbeth *enters. He is carrying a couple of daggers in his blood-steeped hands, and his gait is very unsteady.*

Macb. I have done the deed. Didst thou not hear a noise?

Lady M. I heard the owl scream and the crickets cry.
Did not you speak?

Macb. When?

Lady M. Now. [39

Macb. As I descended?

Lady M. Ay.

Macb. Hark!
Who lies i' th' second chamber?

Lady M. Donalbain.

Macb., *looking on his hands.* This is a sorry sight.

Lady M. A foolish thought to say "a sorry sight."

Macb. There's one did laugh in's sleep, and one cried "Murder!" [50
That they did wake each other. I stood and heard them;
But they did say their prayers, and addressed them

[2] takes shape.
[3] deceive.
[4] B, whose.
[5] B, sides.

Again to sleep.
LADY M. There are two lodged together.
MACB. One cried "God bless us!" and "Amen" the other,
As they had seen me with these hangman's hands. [61
List'ning their fear, I could not say "Amen,"
When they did say "God bless us!"
LADY M. Consider it not so deeply.
MACB. But wherefore could not I pronounce "Amen"?
I had most need of blessing, and "Amen"
Stuck in my throat.
LADY M. These deeds must not be thought [71
After these ways; so, it will make us mad.
MACB. Methought I heard a voice cry "Sleep no more!
Macbeth does murder sleep," the innocent sleep,
Sleep that knits up the ravelled sleave[6] of care,
The death of each day's life, sore labor's bath, [80
Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,
Chief nourisher in life's feast—
LADY M. What do you mean?
MACB. Still it cried, "Sleep no more!" to all the house:
"Glamis hath murdered sleep; and therefore Cawdor
Shall sleep no more, Macbeth shall sleep no more!" [90
LADY M. Who was it that thus cried? —Why, worthy thane,
You do unbend your noble strength to think
So brainsickly of things. Go, get some water,
And wash this filthy witness from your hand.
Why did you bring these daggers from the place? [100
They must lie there: go, carry them, and smear
The sleepy grooms with blood.
MACB. I'll go no more:
I am afraid to think what I have done;
Look on't again I dare not.
LADY M. Infirm of purpose!
Give me the daggers. [*Snatching them from him*] The sleeping and the dead [110
Are but as pictures; 'tis the eye of childhood
That fears a painted devil. If he do bleed,
I'll gild the faces of the grooms withal;
For it must seem their guilt. [*Exit Knocking within. It is* MACDUFF *and* LENNOX *knocking at the south gate.*
MACB., *startled.* Whence is that knocking? [121
How is't with me, when every noise appals me?
What hands are here! Ha! they pluck out mine eyes.
Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnadine, [130
Making the green one red.

Re-enter LADY MACBETH.

LADY M. My hands are of your color, but I shame
To wear a heart so white.—[*Knocking within*] I hear a knocking
At the south entry; retire we to our chamber;
A little water clears us of this deed; [139
How easy is it, then! Your constancy
Hath left you unattended. [*Knocking within*] Hark! more knocking.
Get on your night-gown,[7] lest occasion call us,
And show us to be watchers. Be not lost
So poorly in your thoughts.
MACB. To know my deed 'twere best not know myself.—[*Knocking within.*
Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I [150 would thou couldst! [LADY MACBETH *impatiently takes her husband's hand and drags him out.*

[6] unwrought silk.

[7] dressing-gown.

Scene III

The night is wearing on towards morning. Knocking is heard once more; and a drowsy Porter, *stupid with drink, enters the courtyard.*

Porter. Here's a knocking, indeed! If a man were porter of hell-gate he should have old[8] turning the key. [*The fancy having invaded his muddled brain, he straightway persuades himself that he is indeed Hell's porter. Again there is* [10 *knocking.*] Knock, knock, knock! Who's there, i' th' name of Beelzebub? Here's a farmer that hanged himself on th' expectation of plenty: come in time; have napkins enow about you; here you'll sweat for't. [*Knocking within*] Knock, knock! Who's there in th' other devil's name! Faith, here's an equivocator, that could swear in both the scales against either scale; who committed treason [20 enough for God's sake, yet could not equivocate to heaven: O! come in, equivocator. [*Knocking within*] Knock, knock, knock! Who's there? Faith, here's an English tailor come hither for stealing out of a French hose: come in, tailor; here you may roast your goose. [*Knocking within*] Knock, knock; never at quiet! What are you? But this place is too cold for hell. I'll devil-porter it no further: [30 I had thought to have let in some of all professions, that go the primrose way to th' everlasting bonfire. [*Knocking within*] Anon, anon!—I pray you, remember the porter. [*Opens the gate.*

Enter Macduff *and* Lennox.

Macd. Was it so late, friend, ere you went to bed,
That you do lie so late? [39

Port. Faith, sir, we were carousing till the second cock; and drink, sir, is a great provoker of three things.

Macd. What three things does drink especially provoke?

Port. Marry, sir, nose-painting, sleep, and urine. Lechery, sir, it provokes, and unprovokes; it provokes the desire, but it takes away the performance. Therefore much drink may be said to be an [49 equivocator with lechery; it makes him, and it mars him; it sets him on, and it takes him off; it persuades him, and disheartens him; makes him stand to, and not stand to; in conclusion, equivocates him in a sleep, and, giving him the lie, leaves him.

Macd. I believe drink gave thee the lie last night.

Port. That it did, sir, i' the very throat on me: but I requited him for his lie; [60 and, I think, being too strong for him, though he took up my legs sometime, yet I made a shift to cast him.

Macd. Is thy master stirring?

Enter Macbeth, *washed, and calmer than he was.*

Our knocking has awaked him; here he comes.

Len. Good morrow, noble sir.

Macb. Good morrow, both. [70

Macd. Is the king stirring, worthy thane?

Macb. Not yet.

Macd. He did command me to call timely on him:
I have almost slipped the hour.

Macb. I'll bring you to him.

Macd. I know this is a joyful trouble to you;
But yet 'tis one. [80

Macb. The labor we delight in physics pain.
This is the door.

Macd. I'll make so bold to call;
For 'tis my limited[9] service. [*He enters the castle.*

Len. Goes the king hence to-day?

Macb. He does: he did appoint so.

Len. The night has been unruly: where we lay, [90
Our chimneys were blown down; and, as they say,
Lamentings heard i' th' air; strange screams of death,
And prophesying with accents terrible
Of dire combustion and confused events
New hatched to th' woeful time. The obscure bird

[8] much.

[9] appointed.

Clamored the livelong night: some say the earth
Was feverous and did shake.
MACB. 'Twas a rough night.
LEN. My young remembrance cannot parallel
A fellow to it.

MACDUFF *returns, trembling with excitement.*

MACD. O horror! horror! horror! Tongue nor heart
Cannot conceive nor name thee!
MACB. AND LEN. What's the matter?
MACD. Confusion now hath made his masterpiece!
Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope
The Lord's anointed temple, and stole thence
The life o' th' building!
MACB. What is't you say? the life?
LEN. Mean you his majesty?
MACD. Approach the chamber, and destroy your sight
With a new Gorgon. Do not bid me speak;
See, and then speak yourselves.
[MACBETH *and* LENNOX *go in.*
[*Calling.*] Awake! awake!
[*To the* PORTER.] Ring the alarum-bell.
[*The* PORTER *goes out.*
[*Calling.*] Murder and treason!—
Banquo and Donalbain!—Malcolm!
—awake!
Shake off this downy sleep, death's counterfeit,
And look on death itself! up, up, and see
The great doom's image!—Malcolm!—Banquo!
As from your graves rise up, and walk like sprites,
To countenance[10] this horror! Ring the bell. [*The castle bell begins tolling.*

Enter LADY MACBETH.

LADY M. What's the business,
That such a hideous trumpet calls to parley
The sleepers of the house? speak, speak!
MACD. O gentle lady!
'Tis not for you to hear what I can speak;
The repetition in a woman's ear
Would murder as it fell.—

Enter BANQUO.

O Banquo! Banquo!
Our royal master's murdered!
LADY M. Woe, alas!
What! in our house?
BAN. Too cruel any where.
Dear Duff, I prithee, contradict thyself,
And say it is not so.

Re-enter MACBETH *and* LENNOX.

MACB. Had I but died an hour before this chance
I had lived a blessëd time; for, from this instant,
There's nothing serious in mortality;
All is but toys; renown and grace is dead;
The wine of life is drawn; and the mere lees
Is left this vault to brag of.

Enter MALCOLM *and* DONALBAIN.

DON. What is amiss?
MACB. You are, and do not know't:
The spring, the head, the fountain of your blood
Is stopped; the very source of it is stopped.
MACD. Your royal father's murdered.
MAL. O! by whom?
LEN. Those of his chamber, as it seemed, had done't:
Their hands and faces were all badged with blood;
So were their daggers, which, unwiped, we found
Upon their pillows; they stared, and were distracted;
No man's life was to be trusted with them.
MACB. O! yet I do repent me of my fury,
That I did kill them.
MACD. Wherefore did you so?
MACB. Who can be wise, amazed, temp'rate and furious,
Loyal and neutral, in a moment? No man:
Th' expedition of my violent love

[10] befit.

Outran the pauser, reason. Here lay Duncan,
His silver skin laced with his golden blood;
And his gashed stabs looked like a breach in nature [200
For ruin's wasteful entrance: there, the murderers,
Steeped in the colors of their trade, their daggers
Unmannerly breeched with gore. Who could refrain,
That had a heart to love, and in that heart
Courage to make's love known?
LADY M. Help me hence, ho! [210
MACD. Look to the lady.
MAL., *to* DONALBAIN. <Why do we hold our tongues,
That most may claim this argument for ours?
DON., *to* MALCOLM. What should be spoken
Here where our fate, hid in an auger-hole,
May rush and seize us? Let's away: our tears [221
Are not yet brewed.
MAL. Nor our strong sorrow
Upon the foot of motion.>
BAN. Look to the lady;
[LADY MACBETH *is carried out.*
And, when we have our naked frailties hid,
That suffer in exposure, let us meet,
And question this most bloody piece of work, [231
To know it further. Fears and scruples shake us:
In the great hand of God I stand, and thence
Against the undivulged pretence[11] I fight
Of treasonous malice.
MACD. And so do I.
ALL. So all.
MACB. Let's briefly put on manly readiness,[12] [240
And meet i' th' hall together.
ALL. Well contented.

[11] purpose.
[12] dress ourselves.

[*Exeunt all but* MALCOLM *and* DONALBAIN.
MAL. What will you do? Let's not consort with them:
To show an unfelt sorrow is an office
Which the false man does easy. I'll to England. [249
DON. To Ireland, I; our separated fortune
Shall keep us both the safer. Where we are,
There's daggers in men's smiles: the near' in blood,
The nearer bloody.
MAL. This murderous shaft that's shot [258
Hath not yet lighted; and our safest way
Is to avoid the aim: therefore, to horse;
And let us not be dainty of leave-taking,
But shift away: there's warrant in that theft
Which steals itself when there's no mercy left. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV

Outside the castle, a few hours later, ROSS *is listening to the chatter of an* OLD MAN.

OLD MAN. Threescore and ten I can remember well;
Within the volume of which time I have seen
Hours dreadful and things strange; but this sore night
Hath trifled former knowings. [10
ROSS. Ah! good father,
Thou seest, the heavens, as troubled with man's act,
Threatens his bloody stage: by th' clock 'tis day,
And yet dark night strangles the travelling lamp.
Is't night's predominance, or the day's shame,
That darkness does the face of earth entomb, [21
When living light should kiss it?
OLD MAN. 'Tis unnatural,
Even like the deed that's done. On Tuesday last,
A falcon, tow'ring in her pride of place,

Was by a mousing owl hawked at and killed.
Ross. And Duncan's horses—a thing most strange and certain— [30
Beauteous and swift, the minions[13] of their race,
Turned wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung out,
Contending 'gainst obedience, as they would
Make war with mankind.
Old Man. 'Tis said they eat each other.
Ross. They did so; to th' amazement of mine eyes, [41
That looked upon't. Here comes the good Macduff.

Enter Macduff.

How goes the world, sir, now?
Macd. Why, see you not?
Ross. Is't known who did this more than bloody deed?
Macd. Those that Macbeth hath slain.
Ross. Alas, the day! [50
What good could they pretend?
Macd. They were suborned.
Malcolm and Donalbain, the king's two sons,
Are stol'n away and fled, which puts upon them
Suspicion of the deed.
Ross. 'Gainst nature still!
Thriftless ambition, that wilt ravin up[14]
Thine own life's means! Then 'tis most like [61
The sovereignty will fall upon Macbeth.
Macd. He is already named, and gone to Scone
To be invested.
Ross. Where is Duncan's body?
Macd. Carried to Colmekill;[15]
The sacred storehouse of his predecessors
And guardian of their bones.
Ross. Will you to Scone? [70
Macd. No, cousin, I'll to Fife.
Ross. Well, I will thither.
Macd. Well, may you see things well done there: adieu!
Lest our old robes sit easier than our new! [*Exit.*
Ross. Farewell, father.
Old Man. God's benison go with you; and with those [79
That would make good of bad, and friends of foes! [*Exit* Ross.

[13] darlings.
[14] greedily devour.
[15] the chapel of Columba or Iona.

ACT THREE

Scene I

Banquo *is alone in a room in the palace at Forres.* Macbeth *has been crowned King of Scotland; and* Banquo *has his doubts whether the honor has been achieved honestly.*

Ban. Thou hast it now: King, Cawdor, Glamis, all,
As the wey'ard women promised; and, I fear, [9
Thou play'dst most foully for't; yet it was said
It should not stand in thy posterity,
But that myself should be the root and father
Of many kings. If there come truth from them—
As upon thee, Macbeth, their speeches shine—
Why, by the verities on thee made good,
May they not be my oracles as well, [20
And set me up in hope? But, hush! no more.

A sennet sounds; and Macbeth *enters, crowned, with* Lady Macbeth *in royal robes,* Lennox, Ross, *Lords, Ladies, and Attendants.*

Macb. Here's our chief guest.
Lady M. If he had been forgotten,
It had been as a gap in our great feast,
And all-thing unbecoming. [30
Macb. To-night we hold a solemn supper, sir,
And I'll request your presence.
Ban. Let your highness
Command upon me; to the which my duties
Are with a most indissoluble tie
For ever knit.
Macb. Ride you this afternoon?

BAN. Ay, my good lord.
MACB. We should have else desired your good advice—
Which still hath been both grave and prosperous—
In this day's council; but we'll take tomorrow.
Is't far you ride?
BAN. As far, my lord, as will fill up the time
'Twixt this and supper; go not my horse the better,
I must become a borrower of the night
For a dark hour or twain.
MACB. Fail not our feast.
BAN. My lord, I will not.
MACB. We hear our bloody cousins are bestowed
In England and in Ireland, not confessing
Their cruel parricide, filling their hearers
With strange invention; but of that tomorrow,
When therewithal we shall have cause of state
Craving us jointly. Hie you to horse; adieu
Till you return at night. Goes Fleance with you?
BAN. Ay, my good lord: our time does call upon's.
MACB. I wish you horses swift and sure of foot;
And so I do commend you to their backs.
Farewell! [*Exit* BANQUO.
Let every man be master of his time
Till seven at night; to make society
The sweeter welcome, we will keep ourself
Till supper-time alone; while[1] then, God be with you! [*Exeunt all but* MACBETH *and an* ATTENDANT.
Sirrah, a word with you. Attend those men
Our pleasure?
ATTEN. They are, my lord, without the palace gate.
MACB. Bring them before us. [*Exit* ATTENDANT.] To be thus is nothing;
But to be safely thus. Our fears in Banquo
Stick deep, and in his royalty of nature
Reigns that which would be feared: 'tis much he dares,
And, to that dauntless temper of his mind,
He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valor
To act in safety. There is none but he
Whose being I do fear; and under him
My genius is rebuked, as it is said
Mark Antony's was by Cæsar. He chid the sisters
When first they put the name of king upon me,
And bade them speak to him; then, prophet-like,
They hailed him father to a line of kings.
Upon my head they placed a fruitless crown,
And put a barren sceptre in my gripe,
Thence to be wrenched with an unlineal hand,
No son of mine succeeding. If't be so,
For Banquo's issue have I filed[2] my mind;
For them the gracious Duncan have I murdered;
Put rancors in the vessel of my peace
Only for them; and mine eternal jewel
Given to the common enemy of man,
To make them kings, the seed of Banquo kings!
Rather than so, come fate into the list,
And champion me to th' utterance!—
Who's there?

Re-enter ATTENDANT *with two* MURDERERS.

Now go to the door, and stay there till we call. [*Exit* ATTENDANT.
Was it not yesterday we spoke together?
1 MUR. It was, so please your highness.
MACB. Well then, now
Have you considered of my speeches? Know
That it was he in the times past which held you
So under fortune, which you thought had been

[1] until.
[2] defiled.

Our innocent self. This I made good to you [141
In our last conference, passed in probation with[3] you,
How you were borne in hand,[4] how crossed, the instruments,
Who wrought with them, and all things else that might
To half a soul and to a notion crazed[5]
Say, "Thus did Banquo." [140
1 Mur. You made it known to us.
Macb. I did so; and went further, which is now
Our point of second meeting. Do you find
Your patience so predominant in your nature
That you can let this go? Are you so gospelled[6]
To pray for this good man and for his issue, [160
Whose heavy hand hath bowed you to the grave
And beggared yours for ever?
1 Mur. We are men, my liege.
Macb. Ay, in the catalogue ye go for men;
As hounds and greyhounds, mongrels, spaniels, curs,
Shoughs, water-rugs, and demi-wolves, are clept [170
All by the name of dogs: the valued file[7]
Distinguishes the swift, the slow, the subtle,
The housekeeper,[8] the hunter, every one
According to the gift which bounteous nature
Hath in him closed; whereby he does receive
Particular addition, from the bill
That writes them all alike; and so of men. [181
Now, if you have a station in the file,
Not in the[9] worst rank of manhood, say't,
And I will put that business in your bosoms,
Whose execution takes your enemy off,
Grapples you to the heart and love of us,
Who wear our health but sickly in his life,
Which in his death we perfect. [190
2 Mur. I am one, my liege,
Whom the vile blows and buffets of the world
Have so incensed that I am reckless what I do to spite the world.
1 Mur. And I another,
So weary with disasters, tugged with fortune,
That I would set my life on any chance,
To mend it or be rid on't. [200
Macb. Both of you
Know Banquo was your enemy.
2 Mur. True, my lord.
Macb. So is he mine; and in such bloody distance
That every minute of his being thrusts
Against my near'st of life: and, though I could
With bare-faced power sweep him from my sight, [210
And bid my will avouch it, yet I must not,
For certain friends that are both his and mine,
Whose loves I may not drop, but wail his fall
Whom I myself struck down; and thence it is
That I to your assistance do make love,
Masking the business from the common eye [221
For sundry weighty reasons.
2 Mur. We shall, my lord,
Perform what you command us.
1 Mur. Though our lives—
Macb. Your spirits shine through you. Within this hour at most
I will advise[10] you where to plant yourselves,
Acquaint you with the perfect spy o' th' time,[11] [231
The moment on't; for't must be done to-night,

[3] proving to.
[4] kept expectant.
[5] feeble mind.
[6] influenced by scriptural teaching.
[7] classification of values.
[8] watch-dog.
[9] B. i' th'.
[10] instruct.
[11] F. A. Marshall preferred to read
Acquaint you, with a perfect spy, o' the time,
this being then a preparation for the arrival of the Third Murderer in III 3.

And something from the palace: always thought
That I require a clearness; and with him—
To leave no rubs[12] nor botches in the work— [239
Fleance his son, that keeps him company,
Whose absence is no less material to me
Than is his father's, must embrace the fate
Of that dark hour. Resolve yourselves apart;
I'll come to you anon.

2 MUR. We are resolved, my lord.

MACB. I'll call upon you straight: abide within. [*Exeunt* MURDERERS.
It is concluded: Banquo, thy soul's [250 flight,
If it find heaven, must find it out to-night.

SCENE II

In another room in the palace, LADY MACBETH *has just summoned a* SERVANT *to her.*

LADY M. Is Banquo gone from court?

SERV. Ay, madam, but returns again tonight.

LADY M. Say to the king, I would attend his leisure
For a few words. [9

SERV. Madam, I will. [*Exit.*

LADY M. Nought's had, all's spent,
Where our desire is got without content:
'Tis safer to be that which we destroy
Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy.

Enter MACBETH.

How now, my lord! why do you keep alone,
Of sorriest fancies your companions making, [20
Using those thoughts which should indeed have died
With them they think on? Things without all remedy
Should be without regard: what's done is done.

MACB. We have scotched[13] the snake, not killed it:
She'll close and be herself, whilst our poor malice [30
Remains in danger of her former tooth.
But let the frame of things disjoint, both the worlds suffer,
Ere we will eat our meal in fear, and sleep
In the affliction of these terrible dreams
That shake us nightly. Better be with the dead,
Whom we, to gain our peace, have sent to peace, [40
Than on the torture of the mind to lie
In restless ecstasy. Duncan is in his grave;
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well;
Treason has done his worst: nor steel, nor poison,
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing
Can touch him further.

LADY M. Come on;
Gentle my lord, sleek o'er your rugged looks; [51
Be bright and jovial among your guests to-night.

MACB. So shall I, love; and so, I pray, be you.
Let your remembrance apply to Banquo;
Present him eminence, both with eye and tongue:
Unsafe the while, that we
Must lave our honors in these flattering [60 streams,
And make our faces vizards to our hearts,
Disguising what they are.

LADY M. You must leave this.

MACB. O! full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife;
Thou know'st that Banquo and his Fleance lives.

LADY M. But in them nature's copy's not eterne. [71

MACB. There's comfort yet; they are assailable;
Then be thou jocund. Ere the bat hath flown
His cloistered flight, ere, to black Hecate's summons

[12] impediments. [13] wounded.

The shard-borne beetle with his drowsy hums
Hath rung night's yawning peal, there [80 shall be done
A deed of dreadful note.
LADY M. What's to be done?
MACB. Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck,
Till thou applaud the deed. Come, seeling[14] night,
Scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day,
And with thy bloody and invisible hand
Cancel and tear to pieces that great bond [91
Which keeps me pale! Light thickens, and the crow
Makes wing to the rooky wood;
Good things of day begin to droop and drowse,
Whiles night's black agents to their preys do rouse.
Thou marvell'st at my words: but hold thee still; [100
Things bad begun make strong themselves by ill:
So, prithee, go with me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

The day is dying, and the two MURDERERS *have taken their places outside the palace for the waylaying of* BANQUO *and* FLEANCE *as they return from their ride. A third man has just joined them.*

1 MUR. But who did bid thee join with us?
3 MUR. Macbeth.
2 MUR. He needs not our mistrust, since he delivers [11
Our offices and what we have to do
To the direction just.
1 MUR. Then stand with us.
The west yet glimmers with some streaks of day:
Now spurs the lated traveller apace
To gain the timely inn; and near approaches
The subject of our watch. [20
3 MUR. Hark! I hear horses.
BAN., *within.* Give us a light there, ho!
2 MUR. Then 'tis he: the rest
That are within the note of expectation[15]
Already are i' th' court.
1 MUR. His horses go about.
3 MUR. Almost a mile; but he does usually—
So all men do—from hence to th' palace gate [31
Make it their walk.
2 MUR. A light, a light!
3 MUR. 'Tis he.
1 MUR. Stand to't.

Enter BANQUO, *and* FLEANCE *with a torch.*

BAN. It will be rain to-night.
1 MUR. Let it come down.
[*They set upon* BANQUO. [40
BAN. O, treachery! [FLEANCE *lets the torch fall.*]—Fly, good Fleance, fly, fly, fly!
Thou mayst revenge. [*Fleance escapes in the semi-darkness.*]—O, slave!
[*Dies.*
3 MUR. Who did strike out the light?
1 MUR. Was't not the way?
3 MUR. There's but one down; the son is fled. [50
2 MUR. We have lost
Best half of our affair.
1 MUR. Well, let's away, and say how much is done. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV

Within the palace, the banquet to which BANQUO *had been invited as "chief guest" has been prepared.* MACBETH, LADY MACBETH, ROSS, LENNOX, *and other Lords, fitly attended, enter.*

MACB. You know your own degrees; sit down: at first and last,
The hearty welcome.
LORDS. Thanks to your majesty.
[*They all take their seats.* [10
MACB. Ourself will mingle with society
And play the humble host.
Our hostess keeps her state, but in best time

[14] blinding.

[15] in the list of expected guests.

We will require[16] her welcome.
LADY M. Pronounce it for me, sir, to all our friends;
For my heart speaks they are welcome.

The FIRST MURDERER *appears in the doorway.* [20

MACB. See, they encounter thee with their hearts' thanks;
Both sides are even: here I'll sit i' th' midst:
Be large in mirth; anon we'll drink a measure
The table round. [*Moves over to the door.*] <There's blood upon thy face.
MUR. 'Tis Banquo's, then. [30
MACB. 'Tis better thee without than he within.
Is he dispatched?
MUR. My lord, his throat is cut; that I did for him.
MACB. Thou art the best o' th' cutthroats; yet he's good
That did the like for Fleance: if thou didst it,
Thou art the nonpareil. [40
MUR. Most royal sir,
Fleance is scaped.
MACB. Then comes my fit again: I had else been perfect,
Whole as the marble, founded as the rock,
As broad and general as the casing[17] air;
But now I am cabined, cribbed, confined, bound in
To saucy doubts and fears. But Banquo's safe? [51
MUR. Ay, my good lord; safe in a ditch he bides,
With twenty trenchèd gashes on his head;
The least a death to nature.
MACB. Thanks for that.
There the grown serpent lies; the worm[18] that's fled
Hath nature that in time will venom breed, [60
No teeth for th' present. Get thee gone; to-morrow
We'll hear ourselves again.> [*Exit* MURDERER.
LADY M. My royal lord,
You do not give the cheer: the feast is sold
That is not often vouched, while 'tis a-making,
'Tis given with welcome: to feed were best at home; [71
From thence, the sauce to meat is ceremony;
Meeting were bare without it.
MACB. Sweet remembrancer!
Now good digestion wait on appetite,
And health on both!
LEN. May't please your highness sit?

The Ghost of BANQUO *enters, and sits in* MACBETH'S *place. He is invisible* [80 *throughout to all but* MACBETH, *being indeed but the creature of the King's imagination.*

MACB. Here had we now our country's honor roofed,[19]
Were the graced person of our Banquo present;
Who may I rather challenge for unkindness
Than pity for mischance! [90
ROSS. His absence, sir,
Lays blame upon his promise. Please't your highness
To grace us with your royal company.
MACB. The table's full.
LEN. Here is a place reserved, sir.
MACB. Where?
LEN. Here, my good lord. What is't that moves your highness?
MACB. Which of you have done this?
LORDS. What, my good lord? [101
MACB. Thou canst not say I did it: never shake
Thy gory locks at me.
ROSS. Gentlemen, rise; his highness is not well.
LADY M. Sit, worthy friends: my lord is often thus,
And hath been from his youth: pray you, keep seat; [110
The fit is momentary; upon a thought

[16] request.
[17] surrounding.
[18] snake.
[19] under this roof.

He will again be well. If much you note him,
You shall offend him and extend his passion: [20]
Feed and regard him not. <Are you a man?
MACB. Ay, and a bold one, that dare look on that
Which might appal the devil. [120
LADY M., *contemptuously*. O proper stuff!
This is the very painting of your fear;
This is the air-drawn dagger which, you said,
Led you to Duncan. O! these flaws [21] and starts—
Impostors to [22] true fear—would well become
A woman's story at a winter's fire, [130
Authorized [23] by her grandam. Shame itself!
Why do you make such faces? When all's done
You look but on a stool.
MACB. Prithee, see there! behold! look! lo! how say you?>
Why, what care I? If thou canst nod, speak too.
If charnel-houses and our graves must send [141
Those that we bury back, our monuments
Shall be the maws of kites. [GHOST *disappears*.
LADY M. <What! quite unmanned in folly?
MACB. If I stand here, I saw him.
LADY M. Fie, for shame!
MACB. Blood hath been shed ere now, i' the olden time, [151
Ere human [24] statute purged the gentle weal;
Ay, and since too, murders have been performed
Too terrible for the ear: the times have been,
That, when the brains were out, the man would die,
And there an end; but now they rise [160 again,
With twenty mortal murders on their crowns,
And push us from our stools: this is more strange
Than such a murder is.>
LADY M. My worthy lord,
Your noble friends do lack you.
MACB. I do forget.—
Do not muse at me, my most worthy [170 friends;
I have a strange infirmity, which is nothing
To those that know me. Come, love and health to all;
Then, I'll sit down. Give me some wine; fill full.
I drink to th' general joy o' th' whole table, [179
And to our dear friend Banquo, whom we miss;
Would he were here! to all, and him, we thirst,
And all to all.
LORDS, *rising*. Our duties, and the pledge!

As the KING *is about to drink the* GHOST *again appears to him. He drops the goblet.* [189

MACB. Avaunt! and quit my sight! Let the earth hide thee!
Thy bones are marrowless; thy blood is cold;
Thou hast no speculation in those eyes
Which thou dost glare with.
LADY M. Think of this, good peers,
But as a thing of custom: 'tis no other;
Only it spoils the pleasure of the time.
MACB. What man dare I dare:
Approach thou like the rugged Rus- [200 sian bear,
The armed [25] rhinoceros, or th' Hyrcan tiger;
Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves
Shall never tremble; or be alive again,
And dare me to the desert with thy sword;

[20] fit.
[21] gusts.
[22] compared to.
[23] told on the authority of.
[24] B, humane.
[25] armored.

If trembling I inhabit then, protest me
The baby of a girl. Hence, horrible shadow! [211
Unreal mock'ry, hence! [GHOST *vanishes.*
Why, so! being gone,
I am a man again.—Pray you, sit still.
LADY M. You have displaced the mirth, broke the good meeting,
With most admired [26] disorder.
MACB. Can such things be
And overcome us like a summer's cloud,
Without our special wonder? You make me strange [221
Even to the disposition that I owe,
When now I think you can behold such sights,
And keep the natural ruby of your cheeks,
When mine is blanched with fear.
ROSS. What sights, my lord?
LADY M. I pray you, speak not; he grows worse and worse; [230
Question enrages him. At once, good-night:
Stand not upon the order of your going,
But go at once.
LEN. Good-night; and better health
Attend his majesty!
LADY M. A kind good-night to all!
[*Exeunt Lords and Attendants*
MACB. It will have blood, they say; blood will have blood: [240
Stones have been known to move and trees to speak;
Augurs [27] and understood relations have
By magot-pies [28] and choughs and rooks brought forth
The secret'st man of blood. What is the night?
LADY M. Almost at odds with morning, which is which. [249
MACB. How sayst thou, that Macduff denies his person
At our great bidding?
LADY M. Did you send to him, sir?
MACB. I hear it by the way; but I will send.
There's not a one of them but in his house

[26] caused by surprise.
[27] auguries.
[28] magpies.

I keep a servant fee'd. I will to-morrow— [259
And betimes I will—to the wey'ard sisters:
More shall they speak; for now I am bent to know,
By the worst means, the worst. For mine own good
All causes shall give way: I am in blood
Stepped in so far, that, should I wade no more,
Returning were as tedious as go o'er.
Strange things I have in head that [270
will to hand,
Which must be acted ere they may be scanned.
LADY M. You lack the season of all natures, sleep.
MACB. Come, we'll to sleep. My strange and self-abuse
Is the initiate fear [29] that wants hard use:
We are yet but young in deed. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V

To the usual accompaniment of thunder and lightning the three WITCHES *make one of their fitful appearances upon the heath. They find their queen,* HECATE, *awaiting them.*

1 WITCH. Why, how now, Hecate! you look angerly.
HEC. Have I not reason, beldams as you are, [9
Saucy and overbold? How did you dare
To trade and traffic with Macbeth
In riddles and affairs of death;
And I, the mistress of your charms,
The close contriver of all harms,
Was never called to bear my part,
Or show the glory of our art?
And, which is worse, all you have done
Hath been but for a wayward son,
Spiteful and wrathful; who, as others do,
Loves for his own ends, not for you. [20
But make amends now: get you gone,
And at the pit of Acheron
Meet me i' th' morning: thither he
Will come to know his destiny:
Your vessels and your spells provide,
Your charms and every thing beside.

[29] the fear of one in his novitiate.

I am for th' air; this night I'll spend
Unto a dismal and a fatal end:
Great business must be wrought ere noon: [30
Upon the corner of the moon
There hangs a vaporous drop profound;
I'll catch it ere it come to ground;
And that distilled by magic sleights
Shall raise such artificial sprites
As by the strength of their illusion
Shall draw him on to his confusion:
He shall spurn fate, scorn death, and bear [39
His hopes 'bove wisdom, grace, and fear;
And you all know security
Is mortals' chiefest enemy.
[*Song, within.* "Come away, come away." [30]
Hark! I am called; my little spirit, see,
Sits in a foggy cloud, and stays for me.
[*Vanishes.*
1 Witch. Come, let's make haste; she'll soon be back again. [*They, too, disappear.* [50

Scene VI

In the royal palace at Forres, Lennox *and a* Lord *discuss the most recent developments in the affairs of the kingdom. Both of them show their distrust of* Macbeth; *and* Lennox *waxes very sarcastic in criticism of the usurper.*[31]

Len. My former speeches have but hit your thoughts,
Which can interpret farther: only, I say,
Things have been strangely borne. The gracious Duncan [11
Was pitied of Macbeth: marry, he was dead;
And the right-valiant Banquo walked too late;
Whom, you may say, if't please you, Fleance killed,
For Fleance fled: men must not walk too late.
Who cannot want the thought how monstrous [21
It was for Malcolm and for Donalbain
To kill their gracious father? damnëd fact!
How it did grieve Macbeth! did he not straight
In pious rage the two delinquents tear,
That were the slaves of drink and thralls of sleep?
Was not that nobly done? Ay, and [30 wisely too;
For 'twould have angered any heart alive
To hear the men deny't. So that, I say,
He has borne all things well; and I do think
That, had he Duncan's sons under his key—
As, an't please heaven, he shall not—they should find [40
What 'twere to kill a father; so should Fleance.
But, peace! for, from[32] broad words, and cause he failed
His presence at the tyrant's feast, I hear
Macduff lives in disgrace. Sir, can you tell
Where he bestows himself?
Lord. The son of Duncan,
From whom this tyrant holds the due of birth, [51
Lives in the English court, and is received
Of the most pious Edward with such grace
That the malevolence of fortune nothing
Takes from his high respect. Thither Macduff
Is gone to pray the holy king, upon his aid,
To wake Northumberland and war-like Seyward, [61
That, by the help of these—with Him above
To ratify the work—we may again
Give to our tables meat, sleep to our nights,
Our feasts and banquets free from bloody knives,[33]
Do faithful homage and receive free honors; [70

[30] The song is to be found in III 3 of "The Witch," by Middleton.
[31] It is impossible to fit this scene into any time-scheme.
[32] because of.
[33] B, Free from our feasts and banquets bloody knives.

All which we pine for now. And this report
Hath so exasperate the king that he
Prepares for some attempt at war.
LEN. Sent he to Macduff?
LORD. He did; and, with an absolute "Sir, not I,"
The cloudy messenger turns me his back,
And hums, as who should say, "You'll rue the time [80
That clogs me with this answer."
LEN. And that well might
Advise him to a caution to hold what distance
His wisdom can provide. Some holy angel
Fly to the court of England and unfold
His message ere he come, that a swift blessing
May soon return to this our suffering country [91
Under a hand accursed!
LORD. I'll send my prayers with him!

ACT FOUR

SCENE I

We are in a dark cavern which is the main haunt and dwelling place of the three WITCHES. *The three are crouched around a steaming cauldron in which they are preparing their charms. There is a loud clap of thunder.*

1 WITCH. Thrice the brinded cat hath mewed.
2 WITCH. Thrice and once the hedge-pig whined. [10
3 WITCH. Harpier cries: "'Tis time, 'tis time." [*They all rise and begin a slow movement about the cauldron, chanting the while, and suiting their actions to their words.*
1 WITCH. Round about the cauldron go;
In the poisoned entrails throw.
Toad, that under cold stone
Days and nights hast thirty-one [20
Sweltered venom sleeping got,
Boil thou first i' th' charmèd pot.
ALL. Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.
2 WITCH. Fillet of a fenny snake
In the cauldron boil and bake;
Eye of newt, and toe of frog;
Wool of bat, and tongue of dog;
Adder's fork, and blind-worm's sting; [30
Lizard's leg, and howlet's wing;
For a charm of pow'rful trouble,
Like a hell-broth boil and bubble.
ALL. Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.
3 WITCH. Scale of dragon, tooth of wolf,
Witches' mummy, maw and gulf[1]
Of the ravined salt-sea shark,
Root of hemlock digged i' th' dark, [40
Liver of blaspheming Jew,
Gall of goat, and slips of yew
Slivered in the moon's eclipse;
Nose of Turk, and Tartar's lips;
Finger of birth-strangled babe
Ditch-delivered by a drab,
Make the gruel thick and slab:[2]
Add thereto a tiger's chaudron,[3]
For th' ingredients of our cauldron.
ALL. Double, double toil and trouble;
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble. [51
2 WITCH. Cool it with a báboon's blood,
Then the charm is firm and good.

HECATE *appears.*[4]

HEC. O! well done! I commend your pains,
And every one shall share i' th' gains.
And now about the cauldron sing, [60
Like elves and fairies in a ring,
Enchanting all that you put in.
[*Music and a song,* "Black Spirits."[5]
2 WITCH. By the pricking of my thumbs,
Something wicked this way comes.
Open, locks,
Whoever knocks.

HECATE *vanishes, as* MACBETH *enters.*

MACB. How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags! [71

[1] gullet. [2] glutinous. [3] entrails.
[4] "accompanied," according to the folio, "by the other three Witches."
[5] The song is to be found in V 2 of "The Witch" by Middleton.

What is't you do?
ALL. A deed without a name.
MACB. I conjure you, by that which you profess—
Howe'er you come to know it—answer me:
Though you untie the winds and let them fight
Against the churches; though the yesty[6] waves [81
Confound and swallow navigation up;
Though bladed[7] corn be lodged[8] and trees blown down;
Though castles topple on their warders' heads;
Though palaces and pyramids do slope
Their heads to their foundations; though the treasure
Of Nature's germens[9] tumble all to- [90
gether,
Even till destruction sicken;[10] answer me
To what I ask you.
1 WITCH. Speak.
2 WITCH. Demand.
3 WITCH. We'll answer.
1 WITCH. Say if th' hadst rather hear it from our mouths,
Or from our masters'?
MACB. Call 'em: let me see 'em. [100

The WITCHES *resume their slow movement around the cauldron, chanting, as before.*

1 WITCH. Pour in sow's blood, that hath eaten
Her nine farrow; grease, that's sweaten
From the murderer's gibbet, throw
Into the flame.
ALL. Come, high or low; [110
Thyself and office deftly show.

To the accompaniment of a deafening burst of thunder, an armed HEAD *rises from the cauldron.*

MACB. Tell me, thou unknown power,—
1 WITCH, *cutting him short.* He knows thy thought:
Hear his speech; but say thou nought.

HEAD. Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth! beware Macduff; [120
Beware the Thane of Fife.—Dismiss me.—Enough! [*Sinks into the cauldron.*
MACB. Whate'er thou art, for thy good caution thanks;
Thou hast harped my fear aright. But one word more—
1 WITCH. He will not be commanded. Here's another,
More potent than the first. [129

Again a fearful clap of thunder, and from the steaming cauldron appears a bloody CHILD.

CHILD. Macbeth! Macbeth! Macbeth!—
MACB. Had I three ears, I'd hear thee.
CHILD. Be bloody, bold, and resolute; laugh to scorn
The pow'r of man, for none of woman born
Shall harm Macbeth. [*Descends* [140
into the cauldron.
MACB. Then live, Macduff: what need I fear of thee?
But yet I'll make assurance double sure,
And take a bond of fate: thou shalt not live;
That I may tell pale-hearted fear it lies,
And sleep in spite of thunder.

Once more a terrifying burst of thunder, and from the cauldron arises a third [150
APPARITION, *that of a child crowned, with a tree in his hand.*

What is this,
That rises like the issue of a king,
And wears upon his baby brow the round
And top of sovereignty?
ALL. Listen, but speak not to't.
APP. Be lion-mettled, proud, and take no care [160
Who chafes, who frets, or where conspirers are:
Macbeth shall never vanquished be until
Great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane[11] hill
Shall come against him. [*Vanishes*

[6] foamy. [7] in the blade.
[8] levelled with the ground.
[9] seeds. [10] be surfeited.
[11] only here is the name accented on the second syllable.

MACB. That will never be:
Who can impress the forest, bid the tree
Unfix his earth-bound root? Sweet bodements! good! [170
Rebellion's head, rise never till the wood
Of Birnam rise, and our high-placed Macbeth
Shall live the lease of nature, pay his breath
To time and mortal custom.[12] Yet my heart
Throbs to know one thing: tell me—if your art
Can tell so much—shall Banquo's issue ever [181
Reign in this kingdom?
ALL. Seek to know no more.
MACB. I will be satisfied: deny me this,
And an eternal curse fall on you! Let me know.
[*The cauldron disappears into the ground. Hautboys are heard.*
Why sinks that cauldron? and what noise is this? [190
1 WITCH. Show!
2 WITCH. Show!
3 WITCH. Show!
ALL. Show his eyes, and grieve his heart;
Come like shadows, so depart.

A show of Eight Kings, the last with a mirror in his hand; BANQUO'S GHOST *following.* [199

MACB., *speaking as they appear one by one.* Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo; down!
Thy crown does sear mine eyeballs; and thy hair,
Thou other gold-bound brow, is like the first;
A third is like the former.—Filthy hags!
Why do you show me this?—A fourth! Start, eyes! [209
What! will the line stretch out to th' crack of doom?
Another yet? A seventh! I'll see no more;
And yet the eighth appears, who bears a glass
Which shows me many more; and some I see
That two-fold balls and treble sceptres carry.
Horrible sight! Now I see 'tis true; [220
For the blood-boltered[13] Banquo smiles upon me,
And points at them for his. [*Apparitions vanish.*] What! is this so?
1 WITCH. Ay, sir, all this is so: but why
Stands Macbeth thus amazedly?
Come, sisters, cheer we up his sprites,
And show the best of our delights.
I'll charm the air to give a sound [229
While you perform your antic round,
That this great king may kindly say,
Our duties did his welcome pay.
[*She plays, and the other* WITCHES *dance; and then all vanish.*
MACB. Where are they? Gone? Let this pernicious hour
Stand aye accursëd in the calendar!—
[*Calling.*] Come in, without there!

Enter LENNOX.

LEN. What's your Grace's will? [240
MACB. Saw you the wey'ard sisters?
LEN. No, my lord.
MACB. Came they not by you?
LEN. No, indeed, my lord.
MACB. Infected be the air whereon they ride,
And damned all those that trust them!—I did hear
The galloping of horse: who was't came by? [250
LEN. 'Tis two or three, my lord, that bring you word
Macduff is fled to England.
MACB. Fled to England!
LEN. Ay, my good lord.
MACB. <Time, thou anticipat'st[14] my dread exploits;
The flighty[15] purpose never is o'ertook
Unless the deed go with it; from this moment [260
The very firstlings of my heart shall be
The firstlings of my hand. And, even now,

[12] This sentence seems to be corrupt, and may possibly be spurious.
[13] clotted with blood.
[14] preventest.
[15] fleeting.

To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and done:
The castle of Macduff I will surprise;
Seize upon Fife; give to th' edge of th' sword
His wife, his babes, and all unfortunate souls [270
That trace him in his line. No boasting like a fool;
This deed I'll do, before this purpose cool:
But no more sights! > Where are these gentlemen?
Come, bring me where they are. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II

Ross *is visiting* Lady Macduff *in* Macduff's *castle in Fife, and is vainly endeavoring to console her for her husband's flight. Her little son is present.*

L. Macd. What had he done to make him fly the land?
Ross. You must have patience, madam.
L. Macd. He had none:
His flight was madness: when our actions do not, [10
Our fears do make us traitors.
Ross. You know not
Whether it was his wisdom or his fear.
L. Macd. Wisdom! to leave his wife, to leave his babes,
His mansion, and his titles [16] in a place
From whence himself does fly? He loves us not;
He wants the natural touch; for the poor wren, [20
The most diminutive of birds, will fight—
Her young ones in her nest—against the owl.
All is the fear, and nothing is the love;
As little is the wisdom, where the flight
So runs against all reason.
Ross. My dearest coz,
I pray you, school yourself; but, for your husband, [29
He is noble, wise, judicious, and best knows
The fits o' th' season. I dare not speak much further;
But cruel are the times, when we are traitors
And do not know ourselves; when we hold rumor
From what we fear, yet know not what we fear, [39
But float upon a wild and violent sea
Each way and move.[17] I take my leave of you;
Shall not be long but I'll be here again.
Things at the worst will cease, or else climb upward
To what they were before.—My pretty cousin,
Blessing upon you!
L. Macd. Fathered he is; and yet he's fatherless. [50
Ross. I am so much a fool, should I stay longer,
It would be my disgrace and your discomfort:
I take my leave at once. [*Exit.*
L. Macd. Sirrah, your father's dead:
And what will you do now? How will you live?
Son. As birds do, mother. [59
L. Macd. What! with worms and flies?
Son. With what I get, I mean; and so do they.
L. Macd. Poor bird! thou'dst never fear the net nor lime,
The pit-fall nor the gin.
Son. Why should I, mother? Poor birds they are not set for.
My father is not dead, for all your saying.
L. Macd. Yes, he is dead: how wilt thou do for a father? [71
Son. Nay, how will you do for a husband?
L. Macd. Why, I can buy me twenty at any market.
Son. Then you'll buy 'em to sell again.
L. Macd. Thou speak'st with all thy wit; and yet, i' faith,
With wit enough for thee. [80
Son. Was my father a traitor, mother?
L. Macd. Ay, that he was.
Son. What is a traitor?

[16] his possessions.

[17] No satisfactory emendation has been suggested.

L. Macd. Why, one that swears and lies.

Son. And be all traitors that do so?

L. Macd. Every one that does so is a traitor, and must be hanged.

Son. And must they all be hanged that swear and lie? [90

L. Macd. Every one.

Son. Who must hang them?

L. Macd. Why, the honest men.

Son. Then the liars and swearers are fools, for there are liars and swearers enow to beat the honest men, and hang up them.

L. Macd. Now God help thee, poor monkey! But how wilt thou do for a father? [100

Son. If he were dead, you'd weep for him: if you would not, it were a good sign that I should quickly have a new father.

L. Macd. Poor prattler, how thou talk'st.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Bless you, fair dame! I am not to you known,
Though in your state of honor I am perfect. [111
I doubt some danger does approach you nearly:
If you will take a homely[18] man's advice,
Be not found here; hence, with your little ones.
To fright you thus, methinks, I am too savage;
To do worse to you were fell cruelty,
Which is too nigh your person. Heaven preserve you! [121
I dare abide no longer. [*Hurries away.*

L. Macd. Whither should I fly?
I have done no harm. But I remember now
I am in this earthly world, where, to do harm
Is often laudable, to do good sometime
Accounted dangerous folly; why then, alas! [130
Do I put up that womanly defence,
To say I have done no harm?

Enter Murderers.

What are these faces?

Mur. Where is your husband?

L. Macd. I hope in no place so unsanctified
Where such as thou mayst find him.

Mur. He's a traitor.

Son. Thou liest, thou shag-haired villain. [141

Mur. What! you egg.
Young fry of treachery! [*Stabbing him.*

Son. He has killed me, mother:
Run away, I pray you! [*Dies.*

[Lady Macduff *runs out crying* "Murder!" *The men run off after her.*

Scene III

Malcolm *has, since his flight, been the guest of the English King.* Macduff *has joined him, and is proposing an invasion of Scotland.* Malcolm *is reluctant to join with him, being suspicious that he may be an agent of* Macbeth's *whose purpose is to entrap him. He therefore determines to test* Macduff's *good faith.*

Mal. Let us seek out some desolate shade, and there [11
Weep our sad bosoms empty.

Macd. Let us rather
Hold fast the mortal sword, and, like good men,
Bestride our down-fall'n birthdom; each new morn
New widows howl, new orphans cry, new sorrows
Strike heaven on the face, that it re- [20
sounds
As if it felt with Scotland and yelled out
Like syllable of dolor.

Mal. What I believe I'll wail;
What know, believe; and what I can, redress;
As I shall find the time to friend, I will.
What you have spoke, it may be so perchance.
This tyrant, whose sole[19] name blisters our tongues, [31
Was once thought honest: you have loved him well;

[18] humble.

[19] mere

He hath not touched you yet. I am young; but something
You may deserve of him through me, and wisdom
To offer up a weak, poor, innocent lamb
T' appease an angry god.
MACD. I am not treacherous. [40
MAL. But Macbeth is.
A good and virtuous nature may recoil
In an imperial charge. But I shall crave your pardon;
That which you are my thoughts cannot transpose;
Angels are bright still, though the brightest fell;
Though all things foul would wear the brows of grace, [50
Yet grace must still look so.
MACD. I have lost my hopes.
MAL. Perchance even there where I did find my doubts.
Why in that rawness[20] left you wife and child—
Those precious motives, those strong knots of love—
Without leave-taking? I pray you, [59
Let not my jealousies be your dishonors,
But mine own safeties: you may be rightly just,
Whatever I shall think.
MACD. Bleed, bleed, poor country!
Great tyranny, lay thou thy basis sure,
For goodness dares not check thee! wear thou thy wrongs;
The title is affeered![21] Fare thee well, lord:
I would not be the villain that thou think'st [71
For the whole space that's in the tyrant's grasp,
And the rich East to boot.
MAL. Be not offended:
I speak not as in absolute fear of you.
I think our country sinks beneath the yoke;
It weeps; it bleeds; and each new day a gash [80
Is added to her wounds: I think withal,
There would be hands uplifted in my right;

[20] suddenness.
[21] confirmed.

And here from gracious England have I offer
Of goodly thousands; but, for all this,
When I shall tread upon the tyrant's head,
Or wear it on my sword, yet my poor country [90
Shall have more vices than it had before,
More suffer, and more sundry ways than ever,
By him that shall succeed.
MACD. What should he be?
MAL. It is myself I mean; in whom I know
All the particulars of vice so grafted
That, when they shall be opened, black Macbeth [100
Will seem as pure as snow, and the poor state
Esteem him as a lamb, being compared
With my confineless[22] harms.
MACD. Not in the legions
Of horrid hell can come a devil more damned
In evils to top Macbeth.
MAL. I grant him bloody, [109
Luxurious,[23] avaricious, false, deceitful,
Sudden, malicious, smacking of every sin
That has a name; but there's no bottom, none,
In my voluptuousness: your wives, your daughters,
Your matrons, and your maids, could not fill up
The cistern of my lust; and my desire
All continent impediments would o'erbear [120
That did oppose my will; better Macbeth
Than such an one to reign.
MACD. Boundless intemperance
In nature is a tyranny; it hath been
Th' untimely emptying of the happy throne,
And fall of many kings. But fear not yet
To take upon you what is yours; you may [131
Convey[24] your pleasures in a spacious plenty,

[22] limitless. [23] dissolute.
[24] indulge secretly.

And yet seem cold, the time you may so hoodwink.
We have willing dames enough; there cannot be
That vulture in you, to devour so many
As will to greatness dedicate themselves,
Finding it so inclined. [140
MAL. With this there grows
In my most ill-composed affect on such
A stanchless avarice that, were I king,
I should cut off the nobles for their lands,
Desire his jewels and this other's house;
And my more-having would be as a sauce
To make me hunger more, that I should forge
Quarrels unjust against the good and loyal, [150
Destroying them for wealth.
MACD. This avarice
Sticks deeper, grows with more pernicious root
Than summer-seeming lust; and it hath been
The sword of our slain kings: yet do not fear:
Scotland hath foisons[25] to fill up your will, [160
Of your mere[26] own; all these are portable,[27]
With other graces weighed.
MAL. But I have none: the king-becoming graces,
As justice, verity, temp'rance, stableness,
Bounty, perséverance, mercy, lowliness,
Devotion, patience, courage, fortitude,
I have no relish of them, but abound
In the division of each several crime,
Acting it many ways. Nay, had I pow'r, I should [172
Pour the sweet milk of concord into hell,
Uproar[28] the universal peace, confound
All unity on earth.
MACD. O Scotland, Scotland!
MAL. If such a one be fit to govern, speak:
I am as I have spoken.
MACD. Fit to govern! [180
No, not to live. O nation miserable,

[25] plentiful harvests.
[26] absolute.
[27] endurable.
[28] stir to tumult.

With an untitled[29] tyrant bloody-sceptered,
When shalt thou see thy wholesome days again,
Since that the truest issue of thy throne
By his own interdiction stands accursed,
And does blaspheme his breed? Thy royal father
Was a most sainted king; the queen that bore thee, [191
Oft'ner upon her knees than on her feet,
Died every day she lived. Fare thee well!
These evils thou repeat'st upon thyself
Have banished me from Scotland.—O my breast,
Thy hope ends here!
MAL. Macduff, this noble passion,
Child of integrity, hath from my soul [200
Wiped the black scruples, reconciled my thoughts
To thy good truth and honor. Devilish Macbeth
By many of these trains hath sought to win me
Into his power, and modest[30] wisdom plucks me
From over-credulous haste; but God above [210
Deal between thee and me! for even now
I put myself to thy direction, and
Unspeak mine own detraction, here abjure
The taints and blames I laid upon myself,
For strangers to my nature. I am yet
Unknown to woman, never was forsworn,
Scarcely have coveted what was mine own;
At no time broke my faith, would not [220 betray
The devil to his fellow, and delight
No less in truth than life; my first false speaking
Was this upon myself. What I am truly,
Is thine and my poor country's to command;
Whither indeed, before thy here-approach,
Old Seyward, with ten thousand warlike men, [231

[29] usurping.
[30] cautious.

Already at a point,[31] was setting forth.
Now we'll together, and the chance of goodness
Be like our warranted quarrel. Why are you silent?
MACD. Such welcome and unwelcome things at once
'Tis hard to reconcile. [239

Enter a DOCTOR.

MAL. Well; more anon.—Comes the king forth, I pray you?
DOCT. Ay, sir; there are a crew of wretched souls
That stay his cure; their malady convinces[32]
The great assay of art; but, at his touch,
Such sanctity hath heaven given his hand,
They presently amend.
MAL. I thank you, doctor. [250
[*Exit* DOCTOR.
MACD. What's the disease he means?
MAL. 'Tis called the evil:
A most miraculous work in this good king,
Which often, since my here-remain in England,
I have seen him do. How he solicits heaven,
Himself best knows; but strangely-visited people, [261
All swoln and ulcerous, pitiful to the eye,
The mere despair of surgery, he cures;
Hanging a golden stamp about their necks,
Put on with holy prayers; and 'tis spoken
To the succeeding royalty he leaves
The healing benediction. With this strange virtue, [269
He hath a heavenly gift of prophecy,
And sundry blessings hang about his throne
That speak him full of grace.
MACD. See: who comes here?
MAL. My countryman; but yet I know him not.

Enter ROSS.

MACD. My ever-gentle cousin, welcome hither!

[31] fully armed.
[32] overcomes.

MAL. I know him now. Good God, betimes remove [281
The means that make us strangers!
ROSS. Sir, amen!
MACD. Stands Scotland where it did?
ROSS. Alas! poor country;
Almost afraid to know itself. It cannot
Be called our mother, but our grave; where nothing,
But who knows nothing, is once seen to smile; [290
Where sighs and groans and shrieks that rent the air
Are made, not marked; where violent sorrow seems
A modern[33] ecstasy; the dead man's knell
Is there scarce asked for who; and good men's lives
Expire before the flowers in their caps,
Dying or ere they sicken. [300
MACD. O! relation
Too nice, and yet too true!
MAL. What's the newest grief?
ROSS. That of an hour's age doth hiss the speaker;
Each minute teems a new one.
MACD. How does my wife?
ROSS. Why, well.
MACD. And all my children?
ROSS. Well too. [310
MACD. The tyrant has not battered at their peace?
ROSS. No; they were well, at peace, when I did leave 'em.
MACD., *who has noticed a hesitancy and ambiguity in* ROSS'S *replies.* Be not a niggard of your speech: how goes't?
ROSS. When I came hither to transport the tidings, [320
Which I have heavily borne, there ran a rumor
Of many worthy fellows that were out;[34]
Which was to my belief witnessed[35] the rather
For that I saw the tyrant's power a-foot.
Now is the time of help; your eye in Scotland

[33] common.
[34] in arms.
[35] confirmed.

Would create soldiers, make our women fight,
To doff their dire distresses.
MAL. Be't their comfort,
We are coming thither. Gracious England hath
Lent us good Seyward and ten thousand men;
An older and a better soldier none
That Christendom gives out.
ROSS. Would I could answer
This comfort with the like! But I have words
That would be howled out in the desert air,
Where hearing should not latch[36] them.
MACD. What concern they?
The general cause? or is it a fee-grief[37]
Due to some single breast?
ROSS. No mind that's honest
But in it shares some woe, though the main part
Pertains to you alone.
MACD. If it be mine
Keep it not from me; quickly let me have it.
ROSS. Let not your ears despise my tongue for ever,
Which shall possess them with the heaviest sound
That ever yet they heard.
MACD. Hum! I guess at it.
ROSS. Your castle is surprised; your wife and babes
Savagely slaughtered; to relate the manner,
Were, on the quarry of these murdered deer,
To add the death of you.
MAL. Merciful heaven!—
What! man; ne'er pull your hat upon your brows;
Give sorrow words; the grief that does not speak
Whispers the o'er-fraught heart and bids it break.
MACD. My children too?
ROSS. Wife, children, servants, all
That could be found.
MACD. And I must be from thence!
My wife killed too?
ROSS. I have said.
MAL. Be comforted:
Let's make us med'cines of our great revenge,
To cure this deadly grief.
MACD. He has no children. All my pretty ones?
Did you say all?—O hell-kite! All?
What! all my pretty chickens and their dam
At one fell swoop?
MAL. Dispute it like a man.
MACD. I shall do so;
But I must also feel it as a man:
I cannot but remember such things were,
That were most precious to me. Did heaven look on,
And would not take their part? Sinful Macduff!
They were all struck for thee. Naught[38] that I am,
Not for their own demerits, but for mine,
Fell slaughter on their souls. Heaven rest them now!
MAL. Be this the whetstone of your sword: let grief
Convert to anger; blunt not the heart; enrage it.
MACD. O! I could play the woman with mine eyes,
And braggart with my tongue.—But, gentle heavens,
Cut short all intermission;[39] front to front
Bring thou this fiend of Scotland and myself;
Within my sword's length set him; if he scape,
Heaven forgive him too!
MAL. This tune goes manly.—
Come, go we to the king; our power is ready;
Our lack is nothing but our leave. Macbeth
Is ripe for shaking, and the pow'rs above
Put on their instruments.[40] Receive what cheer you may;
The night is long that never finds the day. [*Exeunt.*

[36] capture.
[37] grief affecting one only.
[38] worthless.
[39] procrastination.
[40] incite their agents.

ACT FIVE

Scene I

MACBETH, *threatened on many hands, has taken the field, leaving* LADY MACBETH *alone in his castle at Dunsinane. She is a wreck of her old indomitable self, and her sleeps are disturbed by re-enactments of her great crime. Her* PHYSICIAN *has been watching at night, in an endeavor to determine the truth of a report by a* WAITING-GENTLEWOMAN *as to her somnambulistic tendency.* [10

DOCT. I have two nights watched with you, but can perceive no truth in your report. When was it she last walked?

GEN. Since his majesty went into the field, I have seen her rise from her bed, throw her night-gown upon her, unlock her closet, take forth paper, fold it, write upon't, read it, afterwards seal it, and again return to bed; yet all this while in a most fast sleep. [20

DOCT. A great perturbation in nature, to receive at once the benefit of sleep and do the effects of watching. In this slumb'ry agitation, besides her walking and other actual performances, what, at any time, have you heard her say?

GEN. That, sir, which I will not report after her.

DOCT. You may to me, and 'tis most meet you should. [30

GEN. Neither to you nor any one, having no witness to confirm my speech.

Enter LADY MACBETH, *with a taper.*

Lo you! here she comes. This is her very guise; and, upon my life, fast asleep. Observe her; stand close.

DOCT. How came she by that light?

GEN. Why, it stood by her: she has light by her continually; 'tis her command. [LADY MACBETH *sets down* [40 *the light, and begins going through the motions of washing her hands.*

DOCT. You see, her eyes are open.

GEN. Ay, but their sense are shut.

DOCT. What is it she does now? Look, how she rubs her hands.

GEN. It is an accustomed action with her, to seem thus washing her hands. I have known her to continue in this a quarter of an hour. [50

LADY M. Yet here's a spot.

DOCT. Hark! she speaks. [*Bringing forth a tablet.*] I will set down what comes from her, to satisfy my remembrance the more strongly.

LADY M. Out, damned spot! out, I say! One; two: why, then, 'tis time to do't. Hell is murky! Fie, my lord, fie! a soldier, and afeard? What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our [60 pow'r to accompt? Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?

DOCT. Do you mark that?

LADY M. The Thane of Fife had a wife: where is she now? What! will these hands ne'er be clean? No more o' that, my lord, no more o' that: you mar all with this starting. [69

DOCT. Go to, go to; you have known what you should not.

GEN. She has spoke what she should not, I am sure of that: Heaven knows what she has known!

LADY M. Here's the smell of the blood still: all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand. Oh! oh! oh!

DOCT. What a sigh is there! The heart is sorely charged.

GEN. I would not have such a heart [80 in my bosom for the dignity of the whole body.

DOCT. Well, well, well!

GEN. Pray God it be, sir.

DOCT. This disease is beyond my practice; yet I have known those which have walked in their sleep who have died holily in their beds.

LADY M. Wash your hands, put on your night-gown; look not so pale. I [90 tell you yet again, Banquo's buried; he cannot come out on's grave.

DOCT. Even so?

LADY M., *taking up the candle.* To bed, to bed: there's knocking at the gate. Come, come, come, give me your hand. What's done cannot be undone. To bed, to bed, to bed. [*Exit.*

DOCT. Will she go now to bed?
GEN. Directly.
DOCT. Foul whisp'rings are abroad. Unnatural deeds
Do breed unnatural troubles; infected minds
To their deaf pillows will discharge their secrets;
More needs she the divine than the physician.
God, God forgive us all! Look after her;
Remove from her the means of all annoyance,
And still keep eyes upon her. So, good-night:
My mind she has mated,[1] and amazed my sight.
I think, but dare not speak.
GEN. Good-night, good doctor.
[Exeunt severally.

SCENE II

The news of the arrival in Scotland of an English force whose object is the seating of MALCOLM *on the throne of his ancestors has caused many Scottish nobles to fall away from* MACBETH. *An army led by* MENTEITH, CAITHNESS, ANGUS, *and* LENNOX *is marching, with drum and colors, to join with the English force.*

MENT. The English pow'r is near, led on by Malcolm,
His uncle Seyward, and the good Macduff.
Revenges burn in them; for their dear causes
Would to the bleeding and the grim alarm
Excite the mortified man.
ANG. Near Birnam wood
Shall we well meet them; that way are they coming.
CAITH. Who knows if Donalbain be with his brother?
LEN. For certain, sir, he is not: I have a file
Of all the gentry: there is Seyward's son,
And many unrough[2] youths that even now
Protest their first of manhood.
MENT. What does the tyrant?
CAITH. Great Dunsinane he strongly fortifies.
Some say he's mad; others, that lesser hate him,
Do call it valiant fury; but, for certain,
He cannot buckle his distempered cause
Within the belt of rule.
ANG. Now does he feel
His secret murders sticking on his hands;
Now minutely[3] revolts upbraid his faith-breach;
Those he commands move only in command,
Nothing in love; now does he feel his title
Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe
Upon a dwarfish thief.
MENT. Who, then, shall blame
His pestered senses to recoil and start,
When all that is within him does condemn
Itself for being there?
CAITH. Well, march we on,
To give obedience where 'tis truly owed;
Meet we the med'cine of the sickly weal,
And with him pour we in our country's purge
Each drop of us.
LEN. Or so much as it needs
To dew the sovereign flower and drown the weeds.
Make we our march towards Birnam.
[They march away.

SCENE III

In a room in the castle at Dunsinane, MACBETH *has with him the* PHYSICIAN *and Attendants.* MACBETH'S *manner is now almost that of a madman. Realizing that he has alienated almost everyone, his reliance is on the prophecies he has obtained.*

MACB. Bring me no more reports; let them fly all:
Till Birnam wood remove to Dunsinane
I cannot taint[4] with fear. What's the boy Malcolm?
Was he not born of woman? The spirits that know

[1] confounded.
[2] beardless.
[3] occurring every minute.
[4] be infected.

All mortal consequences have pronounced me thus:
"Fear not, Macbeth; no man that's born of woman
Shall e'er have power upon thee." Then fly, false thanes,
And mingle with the English epicures:
The mind I sway by and the heart I bear
Shall never sag with doubt nor shake with fear.

A terror-stricken SERVANT *rushes in.*

The devil damn thee black, thou cream-faced loon!
Where gott'st thou that goose look?
SERV. There is ten thousand—
MACB. Geese, villain?
SERV. Soldiers, sir.
MACB. Go, prick thy face, and over-red thy fear,
Thou lily-livered boy. What soldiers, patch?
Death of thy soul! those linen cheeks of thine
Are counsellors to fear. What soldiers, whey-face?
SERV. The English force, so please you.
MACB. Take thy face hence. [*Exit* SERVANT.
[*Calling.*] Seyton!—I am sick at heart
When I behold—[*calling*] Seyton, I say! <This push
Will cheer me ever or dis-ease me now.
I have lived long enough: my way of life
Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf;
And that which should accompany old friends,
As honor, love, obedience, troops of age,
I must not look to have; but, in their stead,
Curses, not loud but deep, mouth-honor, breath,
Which the poor heart would fain deny, and dare not.>
[*Calling.*] Seyton!

Enter SEYTON.

SEY. What's your gracious pleasure?
MACB. What news more?
SEY. All is confirmed, my lord, which was reported.
MACB. I'll fight till from my bones my flesh be hacked.
Give me my armor.
SEY. 'Tis not needed yet.
MACB. I'll put it on.
Send out moe horses; skirr the country round;
Hang those that talk of fear. Give me mine armor.—
How does your patient, doctor?
DOCT. Not so sick, my lord,
As she is troubled with thick-coming fancies
That keep her from her rest.
MACB. Cure her of that:
Canst thou not minister to a mind diseased,
Pluck from the memory a rooted sorrow,
Raze out the written troubles of the brain,
And with some sweet oblivious antidote
Cleanse the stuffed bosom of that perilous stuff
Which weighs upon the heart?
DOCT. Therein the patient
Must minister to himself.
MACB. Throw physic to the dogs; I'll none of it.—
Come, put mine armor on; give me my staff.—
Seyton, send out.—Doctor, the thanes fly from me.—
Come, sir, dispatch.—If thou couldst, doctor, cast
The water of my land, find her disease,
And purge it to a sound and pristine health,
I would applaud thee to the very echo,
That should applaud again.—[*Changing his mind, as the armor is being buckled on him.*] Pull't off, I say.—
What rhubarb, senna, or what purgative drug
Would scour these English hence? Hear'st thou of them?
DOCT. Ay, my good lord; your royal preparation
Makes us hear something.
MACB. Bring it after me.

I will not be afraid of death and bane[5]
Till Birnam forest come to Dunsinane.
DOCT. <Were I from Dunsinane away and clear,
Profit again should hardly draw me here.> [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV

The forces led by MALCOLM, *the two* SEYWARDS, *and* MACDUFF *have joined with those led by* MENTEITH, CAITHNESS, ANGUS, *and* LENNOX; *and* ROSS *has also come in. They are marching with drums beating and colors flying, towards Dunsinane, and are at present approaching Birnam wood.*

MAL. Cousins, I hope the days are near at hand [10
That chambers will be safe.
MEN. We doubt it nothing.
SEYW. What wood is this before us?
MEN. The wood of Birnam.
MAL. Let every soldier hew him down a bough
And bear't before him: thereby shall we shadow
The numbers of our host, and make discovery [20
Err in report of us.
SOLDIERS. It shall be done.
SEYW. We learn no other but the confident tyrant
Keeps still in Dunsinane, and will endure
Our setting down before't.
MAL. 'Tis his main hope;
For, where there is advantage to be given,
Both more and less have given him the revolt, [30
And none serve with him but constrainëd things,
Whose hearts are absent too.
MACD. Let our just censures
Attend[6] the true event; and put we on
Industrious soldiership.
SEYW. The time approaches
That will with due decision make us know
What we shall say we have and what we owe. [40
Thoughts speculative their unsure hopes relate,
But certain issue strokes must arbitrate,
Towards which advance the war.
[*Exeunt, marching.*

[5] ruin.
[6] Await.

SCENE V

Within the castle, MACBETH, SEYTON, *and their men are awaiting the attack.*

MACB. Hang out our banners on the outward walls;
The cry is still, "They come."[7] Our castle's strength
Will laugh a siege to scorn; here let them lie
Till famine and the ague eat them up;
Were they not forced[8] with those that should be ours, [11
We might have met them dareful, beard to beard,
And beat them backward home.
[*A cry of women within.*
What is that noise?
SEY. It is the cry of women, my good lord. [*Exit.*
MACB. I have almost forgot the taste of fears. [20
The time has been my senses would have cooled[9]
To hear a night-shriek, and my fell of hair
Would at a dismal treatise[10] rouse and stir
As life were in't. I have supped full with horrors;
Direness, familiar to my slaughterous thoughts, [30
Cannot once start me.

Re-enter SEYTON.

Wherefore was that cry?
SEY. The queen, my lord, is dead.
MACB. She should have died hereafter;
There would have been a time for such a word.
To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day, [41
To the last syllable of recorded time;

[7] Should probably be "The cry is 'Still they come,' " meaning "They keep on coming."
[8] reinforced.
[9] been chilled.
[10] tale.

And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage, [49
And then is heard no more; it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

Enter a MESSENGER.

Thou com'st to use thy tongue; thy story quickly.
MESS. Gracious my lord,
I should report that which I say I saw,
But know not how to do it.
MACB. Well, say, sir.
MESS. As I did stand my watch upon the hill, [61
I looked towards Birnam, and anon, methought,
The wood began to move.
MACB. Liar and slave!
MESS. Let me endure your wrath if't be not so:
Within this three mile may you see it coming;
I say,[11] a moving grove. [70
MACB. If thou speak'st false,
Upon the next tree shalt thou hang alive,
Till famine cling[12] thee; if thy speech be sooth,
I care not if thou dost for me as much.
<I pall[13] in resolution and begin
To doubt th' equivocation of the fiend
That lies like truth; "Fear not, till Birnam wood [79
Do come to Dunsinane;" and now a wood
Comes toward Dunsinane.> Arm, arm, and out!
If this which he avouches does appear,
There is nor flying hence nor tarrying here.
I gin to be aweary of the sun,
And wish th' estate o' th' world were now undone.
Ring the alarum-bell! Blow, wind! come, wrack! [90
At least we'll die with harness on our back. [*Exeunt.*

[11] Dr. Tannenbaum suggests "saw."
[12] shrink.
[13] B, pull, which may possibly be right.

SCENE VI

The forces of MALCOLM, OLD SEYWARD, MACDUFF, *and the others have now arrived outside the walls of Dunsinane. The* SOLDIERS *are all carrying boughs.*

MAL. Now near enough; your leavy[14] screens throw down,
And show like those you are.—You, worthy uncle,
Shall, with my cousin, your right-noble son, [10
Lead our first battle;[15] worthy Macduff and we
Shall take upon's what else remains to do,
According to our order.
SEYW. Fare you well.
Do we but find the tyrant's power tonight,
Let us be beaten, if we cannot fight.
MACD. Make all our trumpets speak; give them all breath, [20
Those clamorous harbingers of blood and death. [*The trumpets sound.*

[14] leafy.
[15] battalion.

SCENE VII

The attackers have got beyond the outer walls of the castle. MACBETH *is alone, breathing for a space. He is somewhat disheartened, but still ties his hopes to the prophecies.*

MACB. They have tied me to a stake: I cannot fly;
But bear-like I must fight the course. What's he
That was not born of woman? Such a one [11
Am I to fear, or none.

Enter YOUNG SEYWARD.

YOUNG SEYW. What is thy name?
MACB. Thou'lt be afraid to hear it.
YOUNG SEYW. No; though thou call'st thyself a hotter name
Than any is in hell.
MACB. My name's Macbeth.
YOUNG SEYW. The devil himself could not pronounce a title [21

More hateful to mine ear.
MACB. No, nor more fearful.
YOUNG SEYW. Thou liest, abhorred tyrant; with my sword
I'll prove the lie thou speak'st. [*They fight, and* YOUNG SEYWARD *is slain.*
MACB. Thou wast born of woman:
But swords I smile at, weapons laugh to scorn, [30
Brandished by man that's of a woman born.

SCENE VIII

MACDUFF, *elsewhere, is seeking for* MACBETH.

MACD. That way the noise is. Tyrant, show thy face:
If thou be'st slain and with no stroke of mine,
My wife and children's ghosts will haunt me still.
I cannot strike at wretched kerns, whose arms [10
Are hired to bear their staves: either thou, Macbeth,
Or else my sword with an unbattered edge
I sheathe again undeeded. There thou shouldst be;
By this great clatter, one of greatest note
Seems bruited. Let me find him, fortune! [19
And more I beg not. [*Exit. Alarums.*

SCENE IX

The fighting still goes on, till the attackers have surmounted the inner walls also. When victory is secure, OLD SEYWARD *leads* MALCOLM *towards the castle gate.*

SEYW. This way, my lord; the castle's gently[16] rendered:
The tyrant's people on both sides do fight; [9
The noble thanes do bravely in the war;
The day almost itself professes yours,
And little is to do.
MAL. We have met with foes
That strike beside us.
SEYW. Enter, sir, the castle.
[*They go in.*

[16] easily.

SCENE X

In the courtyard of the castle, MACBETH *realizes that the game is up, yet still holds desperately to the words of the prophecy on which he has relied.*

MACB. Why should I play the Roman fool, and die
On mine own sword? whiles I see lives, the gashes
Do better upon them. [9

Enter MACDUFF.

MACD. Turn, hell-hound, turn!
MACB. Of all men else I have avoided thee;
But get thee back; my soul is too much charged
With blood of thine already.
MACD. I have no words;
My voice is in my sword, thou bloodier villain
Than terms can give thee out! [20
[*They fight.*
MACB. Thou losest labor:
As easy mayst thou the intrenchant[17] air
With thy keen sword impress as make me bleed:
Let fall thy blade on vulnerable crests;
I bear a charmëd life, which must not yield
To one of woman born.
MACD. Despair thy charm; [30
And let the angel whom thou still hast served
Tell thee Macduff was from his mother's womb
Untimely ripped.
MACB. Accursëd be that tongue that tells me so,
For it hath cowed my better part of man;
And be these juggling fiends no more believed, [41
That palter with us in a double sense;
That keep the word of promise to our ear,
And break it to our hope. I'll not fight with thee.
MACD. Then yield thee, coward,

[17] not to be cut.

And live to be the show and gaze o' th' time:
We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are,
Painted upon a pole, and underwrit,
"Here may you see the tyrant."
MACB. I will not yield,
To kiss the ground before young Malcolm's feet,
And to be baited with the rabble's curse.
Though Birnam wood be come to Dunsinane,
And thou opposed, being of no woman born,
Yet I will try the last: before my body
I throw my war-like shield. Lay on, Macduff,
And damned be him that first cries, "Hold, enough!" [*Exeunt, fighting.*

SCENE XI

A retreat is sounded, and then enter in triumph to the interior of the castle MALCOLM, *Old* SEYWARD, ROSS, *Thanes, and Soldiers.*

MAL. I would the friends we miss were safe arrived.
SEYW. Some must go off; and yet, by these I see,
So great a day as this is cheaply bought.
MAL. Macduff is missing, and your noble son.
ROSS. Your son, my lord, has paid a soldier's debt:
He only lived but till he was a man;
The which no sooner had his prowess confirmed
In the unshrinking station where he fought,
But like a man he died.
SEYW. Then he is dead?
ROSS. Ay, and brought off the field. Your cause of sorrow
Must not be measured by his worth, for then
It hath no end.
SEYW. Had he his hurts before?
ROSS. Ay, on the front.
SEYW. Why then, God's soldier be he!
Had I as many sons as I have hairs,
I would not wish them to a fairer death:
And so, his knell is knolled.
MAL. He's worth more sorrow,
And that I'll spend for him.
SEYW. He's worth no more;
They say, he parted well, and paid his score:
And so, God be with him! Here comes newer comfort.

Re-enter MACDUFF, *with* MACBETH'S *head.*

MACD. Hail, king! for so thou art. Behold, where stands
Th' usurper's cursëd head: the time is free:
I see thee compassed with thy kingdom's pearl,
That speak my salutation in their minds;
Whose voices I desire aloud with mine;
Hail, King of Scotland!
ALL. Hail, King of Scotland!
[*Flourish.*
MAL. We shall not spend a large expense of time
Before we reckon with your several loves,
And make us even with you. My thanes and kinsmen,
Henceforth be earls, the first that ever Scotland
In such an honor named. What's more to do,
Which would be planted newly with the time,
As calling home our exiled friends abroad
That fled the snares of watchful tyranny;
Producing forth the cruel ministers
Of this dead butcher and his fiend-like queen,
Who, as 'tis thought, by self and violent hands
Took off her life; this, and what needful else
That calls upon us, by the grace of Grace
We will perform in measure, time, and place:
So, thanks to all at once and to each one,
Whom we invite to see us crowned at Scone.
[*Flourish. Exeunt.*

THE REVENGER'S TRAGEDY

ATTRIBUTED TO

CYRIL TOURNEUR

INTRODUCTION

This remarkable play, one of the most powerful of all pertaining to the period, was published in quarto in 1607, and again in 1608, anonymously in each case. Its date of production is not known. Its authorship is discussed in the note on Tourneur. Let it suffice here to say that, while the external evidence favors Tourneur's authorship, the internal evidence points to Middleton.

Here is a play that is amongst the most horrible of the plays of the time. It is a bloody melodrama of the Kyd type, with a brutality surpassing that of "Lear," and equalling that of "The Spanish Tragedy" or "The Second Maiden's Tragedy," but falling short of the horrors of "Titus Andronicus" and "The Bloody Banquet." It would not be a pleasant tragedy to see produced. But not only its physical horrors are calculated to turn the squeamish reader against it; there is perhaps no other play of the period where the moral atmosphere is so putrid. The four opening lines set the tone and display the characters; though even those lines do not present the situation in all its enormity. But do not let it be supposed that the author is a man of immoral tendencies. Quite the contrary; he is a stern and uncompromising moralist; and the play's nastiness is the outcome. He never, like Ford, tries to cast a halo of righteousness over sin; rather, he is bent on painting its hideousness in the most glowing colors. He holds up deformities for our opprobrium, and mitigates nothing; and never does he descend to the comic obscenities so frequent in Shakespeare and Jonson and other of his contemporaries.

With so many detestable features, the play is yet one of the greatest of all, even, strange as it may seem, one of the most attractive. It triumphs over its physical horrors by its perfect artistry; and such is the passionate intensity of the writer that we almost disregard the moral cesspool into which he has plunged us. The music of his verse rings in the ear of one who grasps its principles as does the verse of no other. He is a sort of dramatic Beardsley or Baudelaire, with the color-sense of a Monticelli or a Brangwyn, the harmonic originality of a Mussorgsky or a Stravinsky, and the satiric force and biting rage of a Swift or a Heine superimposed upon an uncompromising moral sense and that love of the disgusting that is the hallmark of your true mis-

sionary moralist. There are passages in the play (such, for instance, as the magnificent address to the skull in III) that, in the application of a unique harmony to the expression of a concentrated bitterness, have no parallel anywhere, not even in "Lear." The writer was not only one of the bitterest of satirists; he was also one of the finest of poets. Into half-a-dozen lines of the address already mentioned there is thrust enough of the essentials of poetry to make a reputation. Read them, and re-read them (they will bear re-reading):

> Does the silkwórm expend her yellow labors
> For thee? for thee does she undo herself?
> Are lordships sold to maintain ladyships,
> For the poor benefit of a bewitching minute?
> Why does yon fellow falsify highways,
> And put his life between the judge's lips,
> To refine such a thing?

The play is crowded with brilliant things, not the least noteworthy of which is a passage greatly and deservedly admired by Charles Lamb:

> O, what a grief 'tis that a man should live
> But once i' th' world, and then to live a bastard—
> The curse o' the womb, the thief of nature,
> Begot against the seventh commandment,
> Half-damned in the conception by the justice
> Of that unbribëd, everlasting law.

And throughout there is a uniquely audacious imagery, as, for instance,

> "To have her train borne up, and her soul trail i' the dirt."

But it is not only the magnificent writing, the glowing fury of fantastic bitterness, the dramatic intensity, that make the play memorable and admirable: it is also superlatively well plotted. It vies in this respect with the best of Jonson, with "The Maid's Tragedy," and with "The Traitor;" but, though no source has been discovered, it may be surmised to have an Italian basis. There is another quality of this dramatist that must not be overlooked, though it is generally overlooked: he had a sense of humor—a humor that was grim, sardonic, bitter, and intensely ironical. The miscarriage of the plot of the Duchess's two sons against their stepbrother, and its consequences, are full of humor of an unusual quality. In the matter of characterization there is less to be said; yet two of the male characters are etched with a sure hand. The Youngest Son may be a horrible creation; but he is extraordinarily real; while the hero is a truly remarkable study, an honorable pervert, obscenely moral, tortuously straight (to speak in paradox), fiendishly cruel and cruelly humorous, an idealist and a cynic, a mass of contradictions, yet always self-consistent. It is something of a triumph for the dramatist that this man, despite his poisonous outlook on life, retains a measure of our sympathy throughout and seems

even to carry a halo of sublimity. The unpleasantness of the play must not blind the student to the fact that it is one of the literary and dramatic masterpieces of the period.

It is the more advisable to issue such a warning because much that has been written of the play leaves somewhat to be desired in the way of æsthetic appreciation. John Addington Symonds, who had in his own time a high reputation as a critic—a reputation which was, in some measure, richly deserved—speaks of the author's draughtsmanship as "spasmodic and uncertain." The movement may be staccato, because it suits the author's purpose that it should be so; but such adjectives as "spasmodic" and "uncertain" are about as unsuitable as any that could be chosen for a description of either the workmanship or the mood. In no play is the purpose clearer, the mood more uniform, or the tone more fitting. It has, with a shocking lack of judgment, been spoken of as "crude;" but it would be hard to name a drama to which the word may be less fittingly applied: it is, on the contrary, one of the most perfect works of art—an art too that is noble in its austerity. Whether we regard it as the work of Tourneur or as the work of Middleton, the author of it should undoubtedly stand in the very front rank of Shakespeare's rivals.

CHARACTERS

THE DUKE.
LUSSURIOSO, *the Duke's son.*
SPURIO, *the Duke's bastard.*
AMBITIOSO, *the Duchess' eldest son.*
SUPERVACUO, *the Duchess' second son.*
THE DUCHESS' YOUNGEST SON.
VINDICI[1], HIPPOLITO, *also called* CARLO — *Brothers of* CASTIZA.

[1] The name appears variously as Vindici, Vendici, Vindice, never as Vendice, in which form modern editors usually render it.

ANTONIO, PIERO — *Nobles.*
DONDOLO, *servant to Gratiana.*
THE DUCHESS.
CASTIZA.
GRATIANA, *Mother of Castiza.*
Judges, Nobles, Gentlemen, Officers, Keeper, Servants.

PLACE: *A City of Italy.*
TIME: *The Renaissance period.*

ACT ONE

Scene I

It is night. Vindici *is standing near* Gratiana's *house with the skull of his dead mistress in his hand—the lady to whom he had been betrothed, but whom the lecherous old* Duke *had poisoned, because she was not willing to become his concubine. As he stands there, nursing his bitter thoughts, the* Duke, *the* Duchess, Lussurioso, Spurio, *and the* Duke's *train pass by, accompanied by* [10 *Torchbearers.*

The Duchess *is the* Duke's *second wife. When he married her, she was a widow with three sons. The* Duke's *heir is his son by his first wife,* Lussurioso.

Vin. Duke! royal lecher! go, grey-haired adultery!
And thou his son, as impious steeped as he; [19
And thou his bastard, true begot in evil;
And thou his duchess, that will do with devil:
Four excellent characters! O, that marrowless age
Should stuff the hollow bones with damned desires,
And, 'stead of heat, kindle infernal fires
Within the spendthrift veins of a dry duke,
A parched and juiceless luxur![1] O God! one [31
That has scarce blood enough to live upon;
And he to riot it, like a son and heir!
O, the thought of that
Turns my abusëd heart-strings into fret.
[*Looking fixedly at the skull.*] Thou sallow picture of my poisoned love,
My study's ornament, thou shell of death, [40
Once the bright face of my betrothëd lady,
When life and beauty naturally filled out
These ragged imperfections;
When two heaven-pointed diamonds were set
In those unsightly rings: then 'twas a face
So far beyond the artificial shine
Of any woman's bought complexiön, [50
That the uprightest man (if such there be,
That sin but seven times a day) broke custom,
And made up eight with looking after her.
O, she was able to ha' made a usurer's son
Melt all his patrimony in a kiss; [59
And, what his father fifty years told,
To have consumed, and yet his suit been cold.
But, O accursëd palace!
Thee, when thou wert apparelled in thy flesh,
The old duke poisoned,
Because thy purer part would not consent
Unto his palsied lust; for old men lustful
Do show like young men angry, eager, violent, [71
Outbidden like their limited performances.
O, 'ware an old man hot and viciöus!
Age, as in gold, in lust is covetous.
Vengeance, thou murder's quit-rent, and whereby
Thou show'st thyself tenant to tragedy;
O keep thy day, hour, minute, I beseech,
For those thou hast determined. Hum! who e'er knew [80

[1] libertine.

Murder unpaid? faith, give Revenge her due,
Sh' has kept touch hitherto: be merry, merry,
Advance thee, O thou terror to fat folks,
To have their costly three-piled flesh worn off
As bare as this; for banquets, ease, and laughter
Can make great men, as greatness goes by clay;
But wise men little are more great than they.

Enter HIPPOLITO.

HIP. Still sighing o'er death's vizard?
VIN. Brother, welcome!
What comfort bring'st thou? how go things at court?
HIP. In silk and silver, brother: never braver.
VIN. Pooh! thou play'st upon my meaning. Prythee, say,
Has that bald madam, Opportunity,
Yet thought upon's? speak, are we happy yet?
Thy wrongs and mine are for one scabbard fit.
HIP. It may prove happiness.
VIN. What is't may prove?
Give me to taste.
HIP. Give me your hearing, then.
You know my place at court?
VIN. Ay, the duke's chamber!
But 'tis a marvel thou'rt not turned out yet!
HIP. Faith, I've been shoved at; but 'twas still my hap
To hold by th' duchess' skirt: you guess at that:
Whom such a coat keeps up can ne'er fall flat.
But to the purpose:
Last evening, predecessor unto this,
The duke's son warily inquired for me,
Whose pleasure I attended; he began
By policy to open and unhusk me
About the time and common rumor;
But I had so much wit to keep my thoughts up
In their built houses; yet afforded him
An idle satisfaction without danger.
But the whole aim and scope of his intent
Ended in this: conjuring me in private
To seek some strange-digested fellow forth,
Of ill-contented nature—either disgraced
In former times or by new grooms displaced,
Since his step-mother's nuptials; such a blood,
A man that were for evil only good—
To give you the true word, some base-coined pander.
VIN. I reach you; for I know his heat is such,
Were there as many concubines as ladies,
He would not be contained; he must fly out.
I wonder how ill-featured, vile-proportioned,
That one should be, if she were made for woman,
Whom, at the insurrection of his lust,
He would refuse for once. Heart! I think none.
Next to a skull, though more unsound than one,
Each face he meets he strongly dotes upon.
HIP. Brother, y' have truly spoke him.
He knows not you, but I will swear you know him.
VIN. And therefore I'll put on that knave for once,
And be a right man then, a man a' th' time;
For to be honest is not to be i' th' world.
Brother, I'll be that strange-composëd fellow.
HIP. And I'll prefer you, brother.
VIN. Go to, then:
The small'st advantage fattens wrongëd men:
It may point out Occasion; if I meet her,
I'll hold her by the foretop fast enough;
Or, like the French mole, heave up hair and all.
I have a habit that will fit it quaintly.
Here comes our mother.
HIP. And sister.

VIN. We must coin:
Women are apt, you know, to take false money;
But I dare stake my soul for these two creatures;
Only excuse excepted, that they'll swallow,
Because their sex is easy in belief. [189

Enter GRATIANA *and* CASTIZA.

GRA. What news from court, son Carlo?
HIP. Faith, mother,
'Tis whispered there the duchess' youngest son
Has played a rape on Lord Antonio's wife.
GRA. On that religious lady!
CAS. Royal blood monster! he deserves to die,
If Italy had no more hopes but he.
VIN. Sister, y' have sentenced most direct and true; [201
The law's a woman; and would she were you!
Mother, I must take leave of you.
GRA. Leave for what?
VIN. I intend speedy travel.
HIP. That he does, madam.
GRA. Speedy indeed!
VIN. For, since my worthy father's funeral, [210
My life's unnaturally to me, e'en compelled,
As if I lived now, when I should be dead.
GRA. Indeed, he was a worthy gentleman,
Had his estate been fellow to his mind.
VIN. The duke did much deject him.
GRA. Much?
VIN. Too much:
And though disgrace oft smothered in his spirit, [221
When it would mount, surely I think he died
Of discontent, the noble man's consumption.
GRA. Most sure he did.
VIN. Did he, 'lack? you know all:
You were his midnight secretary.
GRA. No,
He was too wise to trust me with his thoughts. [231
VIN. I' faith, then, father, thou wast wise indeed;
Wives are but made to go to bed and feed.
Come, mother, sister: you'll bring me onward, brother?
HIP. I will.
VIN. <I'll quickly turn into another.>
[*Exeunt.* [240

SCENE II

The DUKE *and two* JUDGES *are presiding in a hall of justice the next day. The* DUCHESS, LUSSURIOSO, SPURIO, AMBITIOSO, *and* SUPERVACUO *are all present, because the* DUCHESS' YOUNGEST SON *is to be tried for the rape of* ANTONIO'S *lady. The accused is brought in by* OFFICERS. *His bearing is very insolently nonchalant, because he considers that he is secure from punishment.* [10

DUKE. Duchess, it is your youngest son: we're sorry
His violent act has e'en drawn blood of honor
And stained our honors;
Thrown ink upon the forehead of our state,
Which envious spirits will dip their pens into [19
After our death, and blot us in our tombs;
For that which would seem treason in our lives
Is laughter, when we're dead. Who dares now whisper,
That dares not then speak out, and e'en proclaim
With loud words and broad pens our closest shame?
1 JUDGE. Your grace hath spoke like to your silver years, [30
Full of confirmëd gravity; for what is it to have
A flattering false insculption on a tomb,
And in men's hearts reproach? the bowelled[2] corpse
May be seared in, but (with free tongue I speak)
The faults of great men through their seared clothes break.

[2] disembowelled.

DUKE. They do: we're sorry for't: it is our fate
To live in fear, and die to live in hate.
I leave him to your sentence; doom him, lords—
The fact is great—whilst I sit by and sigh.
DUCH. My gracious lord, I pray be merciful:
Although his trespass far exceed his years,
Think him to be your own, as I am yours;
Call him not son-in-law: the law, I fear,
Will fall too soon upon his name and him:
[*Kneeling.*] Temper his fault with pity.
LUS. Good my lord,
Then 'twill not taste so bitter and unpleasant
Upon the judges' palate; for offences,
Gilt o'er with mercy, show like fairest women,
Good only for their beauties, which washed off,
No sin is uglier.
AMB. I beseech your grace,
Be soft and mild; let not relentless law
Look with an iron forehead on our brother.
SPU. <He yields small comfort yet; 'hope he shall die;
And, if a bastard's wish might stand in force,
Would all the court were turned into a corse!>
DUCH., *rising.* No pity yet? must I rise fruitless then?
A wonder in a woman! are my knees
Of such low metal that without respect—
1 JUDGE. Let the offender stand forth:
'Tis the duke's pleasure that impartial doom
Shall take fast hold of his unclean attempt.
A rape! why, 'tis the very core of lust—
Double adultery.
Y. SON. So, sir!
2 JUDGE. And, which was worse,
Committed on the Lord Antonio's wife,
That general-honest lady. Confess, my lord.
What moved you to't?
Y. SON. Why, flesh and blood, my lord;
What should move men unto a woman else?
LUS. O, do not jest thy doom! trust not an axe
Or sword too far: the law is a wise serpent,
And quickly can beguile thee of thy life.
Though marriage only has made thee my brother,
I love thee so far: play not with thy death.
Y. SON. I thank you, troth; good admonitions, faith,
If I'd the grace now to make use of them.
1 JUDGE. That lady's name has spread such a fair wing
Over all Italy, that, if our tongues
Were sparing toward the fact, judgment itself
Would be condemned and suffer in men's thoughts.
Y. SON. Well then, 'tis done; and it would please me well,
Were it to do again: sure, she's a goddess,
For I'd no power to see her, and to live.
It falls out true in this, for I must die;
Her beauty was ordained to be my scaffold.
And yet, methinks, I might be easier 'sessed:
My fault being sport, let me but die in jest.
1 JUDGE. This be the sentence—
DUCH. O, keep't upon your tongue; let it not slip;
Death too soon steals out of a lawyer's lip.
Be not so cruel-wise!
1 JUDGE. Your grace must pardon us;
'Tis but the justice of the law.
DUCH. The law
Is grown more subtle than a woman should be.
SPU. <Now, now he dies! rid 'em away.>

DUCH. <O, what it is to have a[n] old cool duke,
To be as slack in tongue as in performance!>
1 JUDGE. Confirmed, this be the doom irrevocable.
DUCH. O!
1 JUDGE. To-morrow early—
DUCH. Pray be abed, my lord.
1 JUDGE. Your grace much wrongs yourself. [151
AMB. No, 'tis that tongue:
Your too much right does do us too much wrong.
1 JUDGE. Let that offender—
DUCH. Live, and be in health.
1 JUDGE. Be on a scaffold—
DUKE. Hold, hold, my lord!
SPU. <Pox on't!
What makes my dad speak now?> [160
DUKE. We will defer the judgment till next sitting:
In the meantime, let him be kept close prisoner.
Guard, bear him hence.
AMB. <Brother, this makes for thee;
Fear not, we'll have a trick to set thee free.
Y. SON. Brother, I will expect it from you both; [170
And in that hope I rest.
SUP. Farewell; be merry!> [*The* YOUNGEST SON *is taken off by his guard.*
SPU. <Delayed! deferred! nay then, if judgment have cold blood,
Flattery and bribes will kill it.>
DUKE. About it, then, my lords, with your best powers:
More serious business calls upon our [180 hours. [*All go out, except the* DUCHESS.
DUCH. Was't ever known step-duchess was so mild
And calm as I? some now would plot his death
With easy doctors, those loose-living men,
And make his withered grace fall to his grave
And keep church better. [190
Some second wife would do this, and despatch
Her double-loathëd lord at meat or sleep.
Indeed, 'tis true, an old man's twice a child;
Mine cannot speak; one of his single words
Would quite have freed my youngest dearest son
From death or durance, and have made him walk [201
With a bold foot upon the thorny law,
Whose prickles should bow under him; but 'tis not,
And therefore wedlock-faith shall be forgot:
I'll kill him in his forehead; hate, there feed;
That wound is deepest, though it never bleed. [210
And here comes he whom my heart points unto,
His bastard son, but my love's true-begot;
Many a wealthy letter have I sent him,
Swelled up with jewels; and the timorous man
Is yet but coldly kind.
That jewel's mine that quivers in his ear, [220
Mocking his master's chillness and vain fear.
H' has spied me now!

Enter SPURIO.

SPU. Madam, your grace so private?
My duty on your hand.
DUCH. Upon my hand, sir! troth, I think you'd fear
To kiss my hand too, if my lip stood there. [230
SPU. Witness I would not, madam.
[*Kisses her.*
DUCH. 'Tis a wonder;
For ceremony has made many fools!
It is as easy way unto a duchess,
As to a hatted dame, if her love answer,
But that, by timorous honors, pale respects,
Idle degrees of fear, men make their ways [240

Hard of themselves. What have you thought of me?
SPU. Madam, I ever think of you in duty,
Regard, and—
DUCH. Pooh! upon my love, I mean.
SPU. I would 'twere love; but 'tis a fouler name
Than lust: you are my father's wife—your grace may guess now [250
What I could call it.
DUCH. Why, th' art his son but falsely;
'Tis a hard question whether he begot thee.
SPU. I' faith, 'tis true too: I'm an uncertain man,
Of more uncertain woman. Maybe, his groom
O' th' stable begot me; you know I know not! [260
He could ride a horse well—a shrewd suspicion, marry!—
He was wondrous tall; he had his length, i' faith,
For peeping over half-shut holyday windows,
Men would desire him light. When he was afoot
He made a goodly show under a penthouse; [270
And when he rid, his hat would check the signs,
And clatter barbers' basons.
DUCH. Nay, set you a-horseback once,
You'll ne'er light off
SPU. Indeed, I am a beggar.
DUCH. That's more the sign thou'rt great.—But, to our love:
Let it stand firm both in thy thought and mind, [280
That the duke was thy father, as no doubt then
He bid fair for't; thy injury is the more;
For, had he cut thee a right diamond,
Thou had'st been next set in the dukedom's ring,
When his worn self, like age's easy slave,
Had dropped out of the collet[3] into th' grave.

[3] the setting of the stone in a ring.

What wrong can equal this? canst thou be tame, [291
And think upon't?
SPU. No, mad, and think upon't.
DUCH. Who could not be revenged of such a father,
E'en in the worst way? I would thank that sin
That could most injure him, and be in league with it.
O, what a grief 'tis that a man should live [301
But once i' th' world, and then to live a bastard—
The curse o' the womb, the thief of nature,
Begot against the seventh commandment,
Half-damned in the conception by the justice
In that unbribëd everlasting law.
SPU. O, I'd a hot-backed devil to my father. [311
DUCH. Would not this mad e'en patience, make blood rough?
Who but an eunuch would not sin? his bed,
By one false minute disinherited.
SPU. Ay, there's the vengeance that my birth was wrapped in!
I'll be revenged for all: now, hate, begin; [320
I'll call foul incest but a venial sin.
DUCH. Cold still! in vain then must a duchess woo?
SPU. Madam, I blush to say what I will do.
DUCH. Thence flew sweet comfort. Earnest and farewell! [*Kisses him.*
SPU. O, one incestuous kiss picks open hell.
DUCH. Faith, now, old duke, my vengeance shall reach high, [331
I'll arm thy brow with woman's heraldry.
[*Exit.*
SPU. Duke, thou didst do me wrong; and, by thy act,
Adultery is my nature.
Faith, if the truth were known, I was begot
After some gluttonous dinner; some stirring dish [340

Was my first father, when deep healths went round,
And ladies' cheeks were painted red with wine,
Their tongues, as short and nimble as their heels,
Uttering words sweet and thick; and, when they rose,
Were merrily disposed to fall again.
In such a whisp'ring and withdrawing hour,
When base male bawds kept sentinel at stair-héad,
Was I stol'n softly. O damnation meet! [4]
The sin of feasts, drunken adultery!
I feel it swell me; my revenge is just!
I was begot in impudent wine and lust.—
Step-mother, I consent to thy desires;
I love thy mischief well; but I hate thee
And those three cubs thy sons, wishing confusion,
Death, and disgrace may be their epitaphs.
As for my brother, the duke's only son,
Whose birth is more beholding to report
Than mine, and yet perhaps as falsely sown
(Women must not be trusted with their own),
I'll loose my days upon him, hate-all I;
Duke, on thy brow I'll draw my bastardy;
For indeed a bastard by nature should make cuckolds,
Because he is the son of a cuckold-maker.
[*Exit.*

Scene III

In the grounds of the palace the next morning, Vindici *has met* Hippolito *by appointment. He is in disguise (as* Piato*).*

Vin. What, brother, am I far enough from myself?
Hip. As if another man had been sent whole
Into the world, and none wist how he came.
Vin. It will confirm me bold—the child o' th' court.
Let blushes dwell i' th' country. Impudence!
Thou goddess of the palace, mistress of mistresses,
To whom the costly-perfumed people pray,
Strike thou my forehead into dauntless marble,
Mine eyes to steady sapphires; turn my visage;
And, if I must needs glow, let me blush inward,
That this immodest season may not spy
That scholar in my cheeks, fool bashfulness;
That maid in the old time, whose flush of grace
Would never suffer her to get good clothes.
Our maids are wiser, and are less ashamed;
Save Grace the bawd, I seldom hear grace named.
Hip. Nay, brother, you reach out o' th' verge now. 'Sfoot, the Duke's son!
Settle your looks.
Vin. Pray, let me not be doubted.

Enter Lussurioso.

Hip. My lord!
Lus. Hippolito [*To* Vindici.] Be absent; leave us! [Vindici *retires.*
Hip. My lord, after long search, wary inquiries,
And politic siftings, I made choice of yon fellow,
Whom I guess rare for many deep employments:
This our age swims within him; and if Time
Had so much hair, I should take him for Time,
He is so near kin to this present minute.
Lus. 'Tis enough; we thank thee: yet words are but great men's blanks;
Gold, though it be dumb, does utter the best thanks. [*Gives him money.*
Hip. Your plenteous honor! an excellent fellow, my lord.
Lus. So, give us leave. [*Exit* Hippolito.]—Welcome, be not far off;

[4] B, met.

We must be better acquainted: tush! be bold with us:
Thy hand!
VIN. With all my heart, i' faith: how dost, sweet musk-cat?
When shall we lie together?
LUS. <Wondrous knave!
Gather him into boldness! 'sfoot, the slave's [71
Already as familiar as an ague,
And shakes me at his pleasure!> Friend, I can
Forget myself in private; but elsewhere
I pray do you remember me.
VIN. O, very well, sir.
I conster myself saucy.
LUS. What hast been?
Of what profession? [80
VIN. A bone-setter.
LUS. A bone-setter!
VIN. A bawd, my lord—
One that sets bones together.
LUS. <Notable bluntness!
Fit, fit for me; e'en trained up to my hand.>
Thou hast been scrivener to much knavery, then?
VIN. 'Sfoot, to abundance, sir: I have been witness [91
To the surrenders of a thousand virgins;
And not so little.
I have seen patrimonies washed a-pieces,
Fruit-fields turned into bastards,
And, in a world of acres,
Not so much dust due to the heir 'twas left to
As would well gravel a petitiön.
LUS. <Fine villain! troth, I like him wondrously: [101
He's e'en shaped for my purpose.> Then thou know'st
I' th' world strange lust?
VIN. O Dutch lust! fulsome lust!
Drunken procreation, which begets so many drunkards!
Some fathers dread not (gone to bed in wine)
To slide from the mother, and cling [110 the daughter-in-law;
Some uncles are adulterous with their nieces:
Brothers, with brothers' wives. O hour of incest!
Any kin now, next to the rim o' th' sister,
Is men's meat in these days; and, in the morning,
When they are up and dressed, and their mask on, [121
Who can perceive this, save that eternal eye,
That sees through flesh and all? Well, if anything be damned,
It will be twelve o'clock at night; that twelve
Will never 'scape;
It is the Judas of the hours, wherein
Honest salvation is betrayed to sin. [130
LUS. In troth, it is too; but let this talk glide.
It is our blood to err, though hell gape wide.
Ladies know Lucifer fell, yet still are proud.
Now, sir, wert thou as secret as thou'rt subtle,
And deeply fathomed into all estates,
I would embrace thee for a near em- [140 ployment;
And thou shouldst swell in money, and be able
To make lame beggars crouch to thee.
VIN. My lord,
Secret! I ne'er had that disease o' th' mother,
I praise my father: why are men made close,
But to keep thoughts in best? I grant you this, [151
Tell but some women a secret over night,
Your doctor may find it in the urinal i' th' morning.
But, my lord—
LUS. So thou'rt confirmed in me;
And thus I enter thee. [*Gives him money.*
VIN. This Indian devil
Will quickly enter any man but a usurer;
He prevents that by entering the devil first. [161
LUS. Attend me. I am past my depth in lust,

And I must swim or drown. All my desires
Are levelled at a virgin not far from court,
To whom I have conveyed by messenger
Many waxed lines, full of my neatest spirit,
And jewels that were able to ravish her
Without the help of man; all which and more
She (foolish chaste) sent back, the messengers
Receiving frowns for answers.
VIN. Possible!
'Tis a rare Phœnix, whosoe'er she be.
If your desires be such, she so repugnant,
In troth, my lord, I'd be revenged and marry her.
LUS. Push! the dowry of her blood and of her fortunes
Are both too mean—good enough to be bad withal.
I'm one of that number can defend
Marriage is good, yet rather keep a friend.
Give me my bed by stealth: there's true delight;
What breeds a loathing in't but night by night!
VIN. A very fine religion!
LUS. Therefore thus
I'll trust thee in the business of my heart
Because I see thee well-experienced
In this luxurious day wherein we breathe.
Go thou, and with a smooth enchanting tongue
Bewitch her ears, and cozen her of all grace:
Enter upon the portion of her soul,
Her honor, which she calls her chastity,
And bring it into expense; for honesty[5]
Is like a stock of money laid to sleep
Which, ne'er so little broke, does never keep.
VIN. You have gi'n't the tang, i' faith, my lord:
Make known the lady to me, and my brain
Shall swell with strange invention: I will move it,
Till I expire with speaking, and drop down
Without a word to save me; but I'll work—
LUS. We thank thee, and will raise thee.—
Receive her name; it is the only daughter
To Madam Gratiana, the late widow.
VIN. <O my sister, my sister!>
LUS. Why dost walk aside?
VIN. My lord, I was thinking how I might begin:
As thus, "O lady," or twenty hundred devices:
Her very bodkin will put a man in.
LUS. Ay, or the wagging of her hair.
VIN. No, that shall put you in, my lord.
LUS. Shall't? why, content. Dost know the daughter then?
VIN. O, ex'lent well by sight.
LUS. That was her brother,
That did prefer thee to us.
VIN. My lord, I think so;
I knew I had seen him somewhere—
LUS. And therefore, prythee, let thy heart to him
Be as a virgin close.
VIN. O my good lord.
LUS. We may laugh at that simple age within him.
VIN. Ha, ha, ha!
LUS. Himself being made the subtle instrument,
To wind up a good fellow.
VIN. That's I, my lord.
LUS. That's thou,
To entice and work his sister.
VIN. A pure novice!
LUS. 'Twas finely managed.
VIN. Gallantly carried!
A pretty perfumed villain!
LUS. I've bethought me,
If she prove chaste still and immovable,
Venture upon the mother; and with gifts,
As I will furnish thee, begin with her.
VIN. O, fie, fie! that's the wrong end, my lord. 'Tis mere impossible that a mother, by any gifts, should become a bawd to her own daughter!

[5] virtue.

Lus. Nay, then, I see thou'rt but a puisne [6]
In the subtle mystery of a woman.
Why, 'tis held now no dainty dish: the name [269
Is so in league with age that nowadays
It does eclipse three quarters of a mother.
Vin. Does't so, my lord?
Let me alone, then, to eclipse the fourth.
Lus. Why, well said—come, I'll furnish thee; but first
Swear to be true in all.
Vin. True!
Lus. Nay, but swear.
Vin. Swear?—I hope your honor little doubts my faith. [280
Lus. Yet, for my humor's sake, 'cause I love swearing—
Vin. 'Cause you love swearing,—'slud, I will.
Lus. Why, enough!
Ere long look to be of better stuff.
Vin. That will do well indeed, my lord.
Lus. Attend me. [*Exit.*
Vin. O!
Now let me burst. I've eaten noble poison; [291
We are made strange fellows, brother, innocent villains!
Wilt not be angry, when thou hear'st on't, think'st thou?
I' faith, thou shalt: swear me to foul my sister!
Sword, I durst make a promise of him to thee;
Thou shalt disheir him; it shall be thine honor. [301
And yet, now angry froth is down in me,
It would not prove the meanest policy,
In this disguise, to try the faith of both.
Another might have had the selfsame office;
Some slave that would have wrought effectually,
Ay, and perhaps o'erwrought 'em; therefore I, [310
Being thought travelled, will apply myself
Unto the selfsame form, forget my nature,
As if no part about me were kin to 'em,
So touch 'em; though I durst almost for good
Venture my lands in Heaven upon their blood.

[6] novice.

Scene IV

In a room in Antonio's *house,* Antonio *shows the dead body of his wife to* Hippolito, Piero, *and Lords.*

Ant. Draw nearer, lords, and be sad witnesses
Of a fair comely building newly fall'n,
Being falsely undermined. Violent rape
Has played a glorious act: behold, my lords,
A sight that strikes man out of me. [10
Piero. That virtuous lady!
Ant. Precedent for wives!
Hip. The blush of many women, whose chaste presence
Would e'en call shame up to their cheeks, and make
Pale wanton sinners have good colors.
Ant. Dead!
Her honor first drank poison, and her life, [20
Being fellows in one house, did pledge her honor.
Piero. O, grief of many!
Ant. I marked not this before:
A prayer-book, the pillow to her cheek:
This was her rich confection; and another
Placed in her right hand, with a leaf tucked up,
Pointing to these words—
"Melius virtute mori, quam per dedecus vivere:" [31
True and effectual it is indeed.
Hip. My lord, since you invite us to your sorrows,
Let's truly taste 'em, that, with equal comfort,
As to ourselves, we may relieve your wrongs:
We have grief too, that yet walks without tongue; [40
Curæ leves loquuntur, majores stupent.
Ant. You deal with truth, my lord;
Lend me but your attentions, and I'll cut
Long grief into short words. Last revelling night,

When torch-light made an artificial noon
About the court, some courtiers in the masque,
Putting on better faces than their own,
Being full of fraud and flattery—amongst whom
The duchess's youngest son (that moth to honor)
Filled up a room, and with long lust to eat
Into my wearing, amongst all the ladies
Singled out that dear form, who ever lived
As cold in lust as she is now in death
(Which that step-duchess's monster knew too well),
And therefore, in the height of all the revels,
When music was heard loudest, courtiers busiest,
And ladies great with laughter—O vicious minute!
Unfit but for relation to be spoke of:
Then with a face more impudent than his vizard,
He harried her amidst a throng of panders,
That live upon damnation of both kinds,
And fed the ravenous vulture of his lust.
O death to think on't! She, her honor forced,
Deemed it a nobler dowry for her name
To die with poison than to live with shame.

HIP. A wondrous lady! of rare fire compact;
Sh' has made her name an empress by that act.

PIERO. My lord, what judgment follows the offender?

ANT. Faith, none, my lord; it cools, and is deferred.

PIERO. Delay the doom for rape!

ANT. O, you must note
Who 'tis should die,
The duchess's son! she'll look to be a saver:
Judgment, in this age, is near kin to favor.

HIP. Nay, then, step forth, thou bribeless officer: [*Draws his sword.*
I bind you all in steel, to bind you surely;
Here let your oaths meet, to be kept and paid,
Which else will stick like rust, and shame the blade;
Strengthen my vow that, if, at the next sitting,
Judgment speak all in gold, and spare the blood
Of such a serpent, e'en before their seats
To let his soul out, which long time was found
Guilty in Heaven—

ALL. We swear it, and will act it.

ANT. Kind gentlemen, I thank you in mine ire.

HIP. 'Twere pity
The ruins of so fair a monument
Should not be dipped in the defacer's blood.

PIERO. Her funeral shall be wealthy; for her name
Merits a tomb of pearl. My Lord Antonio,
For this time wipe your lady from your eyes;
No doubt our grief and yours may one day court it,
When we are more familiar with revenge.

ANT. That is my comfort, gentlemen, and I joy
In this one happiness above the rest,
Which will be called a miracle at last;
That, being an old man, I'd a wife so chaste.

ACT TWO

SCENE I

CASTIZA, *in her mother's house, is reflecting on the siege laid to her by the* DUKE'S *son.*

CAS. How hardly shall that maiden be beset,
Whose only fortunes are her constant thoughts,
That has no other child's part but her honor,
That keeps her low and empty in estate!

Maids and their honors are like poor beginners;
Were not sin rich, there would be fewer sinners;
Why had not virtue a revénue? Well,
I know the cause: 'twould have impoverished hell.

Enter DONDOLO.

How now, Dondolo?

DON. Madonna, there is one, as they [20 say, a thing of flesh and blood—a man, I take him by his beard, that would very desirously mouth to mouth with you.

CAS. What's that?

DON. Show his teeth in your company.

CAS. I understand thee not.

DON. Why, speak with you, madonna.

CAS. Why, say so, madman, and cut off a great deal of dirty way; had it not been better spoke in ordinary words, that one would speak with me? [31

DON. Ha, ha! that's as ordinary as two shillings. I would strive a little to show myself in my place; a gentleman-usher scorns to use the phrase and fancy of a serving-man.

CAS. Yours be your own, sir; go, direct him hither; [*Exit* DONDOLO.
I hope some happy tidings from my brother, [40
That lately travelled, whom my soul affects.
Here he comes.

Enter VINDICI, *disguised as* PIATO.

VIN. Lady, the best of wishes to your sex—
Fair skins and new gowns.

CAS. O, they shall thank you, sir. [*He offers her a letter.*
Whence this? [50

VIN. O, from a dear and worthy friend, Mighty—

CAS., *cutting him short.* From whom?

VIN. The duke's son!

CAS. Receive that. [*Boxes his ear.*
I swore I would put anger in my hand,
And pass the virgin limits of my sex,[1]

[1] B, self.

To him that next appeared in that base office, [60
To be his sin's attorney. Bear to him
That figure of my hate upon thy cheek,
Whilst 'tis yet hot, and I'll reward thee for't;
Tell him my honor shall have a rich name,
When several harlots shall share his with shame.
Farewell; commend me to him in my hate. [*Exit.* [70

VIN. It is the sweetest box that e'er my nose came nigh;
The finest drawn-work cuff that e'er was worn;
I'll love this blow for ever, and this cheek
Shall still henceforward take the wall of this.
O, I'm above my tongue: most constant sister, [80
In this thou hast right honorable shown.
Many are called by their honor that have none;
Thou art approved for ever in my thoughts.
It is not in the power of words to taint thee;
And yet for the salvation of my oath,
As my resolve in that point, I will lay
Hard siege unto my mother, though I know [91
A syren's tongue could not bewitch her so.
Mass! fitly, here she comes! thanks, my disguise!—

Enter GRATIANA.

Madam, good afternoon.

GRA. Y'are welcome, sir.

VIN. The next of Italy commends him to you, [99
Our mighty expectation, the duke's son.

GRA. I think myself much honored that he pleases
To rank me in his thoughts.

VIN. So may you, lady:
One that is like to be our sudden duke;
The crown gapes for him every tide, and then

Commander o'er us all; do but think on him,
How blest were they now that could [110
pleasure him—
E'en with anything almost!
GRA. Ay, save their honor.
VIN. Tut, one would let a little of that go too,
And ne'er be seen in't—ne'er be seen in't, mark you;
I'd wink, and let it go.
GRA. Marry, but I would not.
VIN. Marry but I would, I hope; I know you would too, [121
If you'd that blood now, which you gave your daughter.
To her indeed 'tis this wheel comes about;
That man that must be all this, perhaps ere morning
(For his white father does but mould away),
Has long desired your daughter. [130
GRA. "Desired"?
VIN. Nay, but hear me;
He desires now, that will command hereafter:
Therefore be wise. I speak as more a friend
To you than him: madam, I know y'are poor,
And, 'lack the day! [139
There are too many poor ladies already;
Why should you wax[2] the number? 'Tis despised.
Live wealthy, rightly understand the world,
And chide away that foolish country girl
Keeps company with your daughter—Chastity.
GRA. O fie, fie! the riches of the world cannot hire [149
A mother to such a most unnatural task.
VIN. No, but a thousand angels[3] can:
Men have no power; angels must work you to't:
The world descends into such baseborn evils,
That forty angels can make fourscore devils.
There will be fools still, I perceive—still fools.
Would I be poor, dejected, scorned of [160
greatness,
Swept from the palace, and see others'[4] daughters
Spring with the dew o' th' court, having mine own
So much desired and loved by the duke's son?
No, I would raise my state upon her breast,
And call her eyes my tenants; I would count [171
My yearly maintenance upon her cheeks;
Take coach upon her lip; and all her parts
Should keep men after men, and I would ride
In pleasure upon pleasure.
You took great pains for her, once when it was;
Let her requite it now, though it be [180
but some.
You brought her forth: she may well bring you home.
GRA. O Heavens! this o'ercomes me!
VIN. <Not, I hope, already!>
GRA. <It is too strong for me; men know that know us,
We are so weak, their words can overthrow us; [189
He touched me nearly, made my virtues bate,[5]
When his tongue struck upon my poor estate.>
VIN. <I e'en quake to proceed; my spirit turns edge:
I fear me she's unmothered; yet I'll venture.
That woman is all male whom none can enter.>
What think you now, lady? Speak, are you wiser? [201
What said advancement to you? Thus it said:
"The daughter's fall lifts up the mother's head."

[2] B, vex.
[3] Note the play upon words, an angel being a gold coin.
[4] B, other.
[5] dwindle.

Did it not, madam? But I'll swear it does,
In many places. Tut, this age fears no man:
'Tis no shame to be bad, because 'tis common.
GRA. Ay, that's the comfort on't.
VIN. <"The comfort on't!">
I keep the best for last: can these persuade you [*Gives her money.*
To forget Heaven, and—
GRA. Ay, these are they—
VIN. O!
GRA. That enchant our sex. These are
The means that govern our affections.—
[*Eyeing the money lovingly.*] That woman
Will not be troubled with the mother long,
That sees the comfortable shine of you:
I blush to think what for your sakes I'll do.
VIN. <O suffering Heaven, with thy invisible finger,
E'en at this instant turn the precious side
Of both mine eyeballs inward, not to see myself.>
GRA. Look you, sir.
VIN. Holla!
GRA., *giving him money.* Let this thank your pains.
VIN. O, y'are kind, madam.
GRA. I'll see how I can move.
VIN. Your words will sting.
GRA. If she be still chaste, I'll ne'er call her mine.
VIN. <Spoke truer than you meant it.>
GRA., *calling.* Daughter Castiza.

Re-enter CASTIZA.

CAS. Madam.
VIN., *to* GRATIANA. <O, she's yonder; meet her.>—
<Troops of celestial soldiers guard her heart.
Yon dam has devils enough to take her part.>
CAS. Madam, what makes yon evil-officed man
In presence of you?
GRA. Why?
CAS. He lately brought
Immodest writing sent from the duke's son,
To tempt me to dishonorable act.
GRA. Dishonorable act!—good honorable fool,
That wouldst be honest, 'cause thou wouldst be so,
Producing no one reason but thy will.
And't has a good report, prettily commended,
But pray, by whom? Mean people, ignorant people;
The better sort, I'm sure, cannot abide it.
And by what rule should we square out our lives,
But by our betters' actions? O, if thou knew'st
What 'twere to lose it, thou would never keep it!
But there's a cold curse laid upon all maids;
Whilst others clip[6] the sun, they clasp the shades.
Virginity is paradise locked up.
You cannot come by yourselves without fee;
And 'twas decreed that man should keep the key!
Deny advancement! treasure! the duke's son!
CAS. I cry you mercy! lady, I mistook you!
Pray did you see my mother? which way went you?
Pray God, I have not lost her.
VIN. <Prettily put by!>
GRA. Are you as proud to me as coy to him?
Do you not know me now?
CAS. Why, are you she?
The world's so changed one shape into another,
It is a wise child now that knows her mother.
VIN. <Most right, i' faith.>
GRA. I owe your cheek my hand
For that presumption now; but I'll forget it.

[6] hug.

Come, you shall leave those childish 'haviörs,
And understand your time. Fortunes flow to you;
What, will you be a girl?
If all feared drowning that spy waves ashore,
Gold would grow rich, and all the merchants poor.
CAS. It is a pretty saying of a wicked one;
But methinks now it does not show so well
Out of your mouth—
Better in his.
VIN. <Faith, bad enough in both,
Were I in earnest, as I'll seem no less.>
I wonder, lady, your own mother's words
Cannot be taken, nor stand in full force.
'Tis honesty you urge: what's honesty?
'Tis but Heaven's beggar; and what woman is
So foolish to keep honesty, and be
Not able to keep herself? No,
Times are grown wiser, and will keep less charge.
A maid that has small portion now intends
To break up house, and live upon her friends;
How blest are you! you have happiness alone;
Others must fall to thousands, you to one,
Sufficient in himself to make your forehead
Dazzle the world with jewels, and petitionary people
Start at your presence.
GRA. O, if I were young,
I should be ravished.
CAS. Ay, to lose your honor!
VIN. 'Slid, how can you lose your honor to deal with my lord's grace?
He'll add more honor to it by his title;
Your mother will tell you how.
GRA. [Ay,] that I will.
VIN. O, think upon the pleasure of the palace!
Secured ease and state! the stirring meats,
Ready to move out of the dishes, that e'en now
Quicken when they're eaten!
Banquets abroad by torchlight! music! sports!
Bareheaded vassals, that had ne'er the fortune
To keep on their own hats, but let horns[7] wear 'em!
Nine coaches waiting—hurry, hurry, hurry—
CAS. Ay, to the devil.
VIN. <Ay, to the devil!> To the duke, by my faith.
GRA. Ay, to the duke: daughter, you'd scorn to think o' th' devil, an you were there once.
VIN. <True, for most there are as proud as he for his heart, i' faith.>
Who'd sit at home in a neglected room,
Dealing her short-lived beauty to the pictures,
That are as useless as old men, when those
Poorer in face and fortunes than herself
Walk with a hundred acres on their backs,
Fair meadows cut into green foreparts? O,
It was the greatest blessing ever happened to woman
When farmers' sons agreed and met again,
To wash their hands, and come up gentlemen!
The commonwealth has flourished ever since:
Lands that were mete[8] by the rod, that labor's spared;
Tailors ride down, and measure 'em by the yard.
Fair trees, those comely foretops of the field,
Are cut to maintain head-tires—much untold.
All thrives but chastity; she lies a-cold.
Nay, shall I come nearer to you? mark but this:
Why are so few honest[9] women, but because 'tis the poorer profession? that's

[7] Stags' horns used as hat-pegs.
[8] measured.
[9] virtuous.

accounted best that's best followed; least in trade, least in fashion; and that's not honesty, believe it; and do but note the low[10] and dejected price of it:
Lose but a pearl, we search, cannot [410
brook it:
But that[11] once gone, who is so mad to look it?
GRA. Troth, he says true.
CAS. False! I defy you both.
I have endured you with an ear of fire;
Your tongues have struck hot irons on my face.—
Mother, come from that poisonous woman there. [420
GRA. Where?
CAS. Do you not see her? she's too inward, then!
Slave, perish in thy office! you Heavens, please
Henceforth to make the mother a disease,
Which first begins with me: yet I've outgone you. [*Exit.*
VIN. <O angels, clap your wings upon the skies, [430
And give this virgin crystal plaudites!>
GRA. Peevish, coy, foolish!—but return this answer:
My lord shall be most welcome, when his pleasure
Conducts him this way. I will sway my own:
Women with women can work best alone.
VIN. Indeed, I'll tell him so. [*Exit* GRATIANA. [440
O, more uncivil, more unnatural,
Than those base-titled creatures that look downward;
Why does not Heaven turn black, or with a frown
Undo the world? Why does not the earth start up,
And strike the sins that tread upon't? O, were't not
For gold and women, there would be no damnation: [451
Hell would look like a lord's great kitchen without fire in't;
But 'twas decreed, before the world began,
That they should be the hooks to catch at man. [*Exit.*

[10] B, love.
[11] honesty=chastity.

SCENE II

LUSSURIOSO *is very well pleased with his new tool* PIATO, *and is congratulating* HIPPOLITO *upon his discovery. They are in a corridor of the palace. It is night of the day on which* LUSSURIOSO *sent* PIATO *on his mission.*

LUS. I much applaud
Thy judgment; thou art well-read in a fellow;
And 'tis the deepest art to study man. [10
I know this, which I never learnt in schools,
The world's divided into knaves and fools.
HIP. <"Knave" in your face, my lord—behind your back.>
LUS. And I much thank thee, that thou hast preferred
A fellow of discourse, well-mingled,
And whose brain time hath seasoned.
HIP. True, my lord, [20
We shall find season once, I hope. <O villain!
To make such an unnatural slave of me!
But—>
LUS. Mass, here he comes!
HIP. <And now shall I have free leave to depart.>
LUS. Your absence; leave us.
HIP. <Are not my thoughts true?
I must remove; but, brother, you may stay. [31
Heart! we are both made bawds a new-found way!> [*Exit.*

Enter VINDICI, *disguised as* PIATO.

LUS. Now we're an even number; a third man's dangerous,
Especially her brother. Say, be free:
Have I a pleasure toward—
VIN. O my lord!
LUS. Ravish me in thine answer; art thou rare? [41
Hast thou beguiled her of salvation,
And rubbed hell o'er with honey? Is she a woman?
VIN. In all but in desire.
LUS. Then she's in nothing.

I bate in courage now.
VIN. The words I brought
Might well have made indifferent honest naught.
A right good woman in these days is changed
Into white money with less labor far;
Many a maid has turned to Máhomet
With easier working: I durst undertake,
Upon the pawn and forfeit of my life,
With half those words to flat a Puritan's wife.
But she is close and good; yet 'tis a doubt
By this time.—O, the mother, the mother!
LUS. I never thought their sex had been a wonder,
Until this minute. What fruit from the mother?
VIN. <How must I blister my soul, be forsworn,
Or shame the woman that received me first!
I will be true.—Thou liv'st not to proclaim:
Spoke to a dying man, shame has no shame.>
My lord.
LUS. Who's that?
VIN. Here's none but I, my lord.
LUS. What would thy haste utter?
VIN. Comfort.
LUS. Welcome.
VIN. The maid being dull, having no mind to travel
Into unknown lands, what did I straight,
But set spurs to the mother? golden spurs
Will put her to a false gallop in a trice.
LUS. Is't possible that in this
The mother should be damned before the daughter?
VIN. O, that's good manners, my lord; the mother for her age must go foremost, you know.
LUS. Thou'st spoke that true! but where comes in this comfort?
VIN. In a fine place, my lord: the unnatural mother
Did with her tongue so hard beset her honor,
That the poor fool was struck with silent wonder;
Yet still the maid, like an unlighted taper,
Was cold and chaste, save that her mother's breath
Did blow fire on her cheeks. The girl departed;
But the good ancient madam, half mad, threw me
These promising words, which I took deeply note of:
"My lord shall be most welcome"—
LUS. Faith, I thank her.
VIN. "When his pleasure conducts him this way."—
LUS. That shall be soon, i' faith.
VIN. "I will sway mine own:"—
LUS. She does the wiser: I commend her for't.
VIN. "Women with women can work best alone."
LUS. By this light, and so they can; give 'em their due,
Men are not comparable to 'em.
VIN. No, that's true; for you shall have one woman knit more in an hour than any man can ravel again in seven-and-twenty years.
LUS. Now my desires are happy; I'll make 'em freemen now.
Thou art a precious fellow; faith, I love thee;
Be wise and make it thy revenue; beg, beg;
What office couldst thou be ambitious for?
VIN. Office, my lord! marry, if I might have my wish, I would have one that was never begged yet.
LUS. Nay, then, thou canst have none.
VIN. Yes, my lord, I could pick out another office yet; nay, and keep a horse and drab upon't.
LUS. Prythee, good bluntness, tell me.
VIN. Why, I would desire but this, my lord—to have all the fees behind the arras, and all the farthingales that fall plump about twelve o'clock at night upon the rushes.
LUS. Thou'rt a mad, apprehensive

knave; dost think to make any great purchase of that? [149

VIN. O, 'tis an unknown thing, my lord; I wonder't has been missed so long.

LUS. Well, this night I'll visit her, and 'tis till then

A year in my desires—farewell, attend:
Trust me with thy preferment.

VIN. My loved lord! [*Exit* LUSSURIOSO.

O, shall I kill him o' th' wrong side now? no!
Sword, thou wast never a backbiter yet.
I'll pierce him to his face; he shall [160
die looking upon me.—
Thy veins are swelled with lust, this shall unfill 'em.
Great men were gods, if beggars could not kill 'em.—
Forgive me, Heaven, to call my mother wicked!
O, lessen not my days upon the earth;
I cannot honor her.—By this, I fear me,
Her tongue has turned my sister unto use.
I was a villain not to be forsworn [171
To this our lecherous hope, the duke's son;
For lawyers, merchants, some divines, and all,
Count beneficial perjury a sin small.
It shall go hard yet but I'll guard her honor
And keep the ports sure. [179

HIPPOLITO *re-enters.*

HIP. Brother, how goes the world? I would know news of you;
But I have news to tell you.

VIN. What, in the name of knavery?

HIP. Knavery, faith;
This vicious old duke's worthily abused;
The pen of his bastard writes him cuckold.

VIN. His bastard?

HIP. Pray, believe it; he and the [190
duchess
By night meet in their linen; they have been seen
By stair-foot panders.

VIN. O, sin foul and deep!
Great faults are winked at when the duke's asleep.
See, see, here comes the Spurio.

HIP. Monstrous luxur!

VIN. Unbraced! two of his valiant bawds with him! [201
O, there's a wicked whisper; hell is in his ear.
Stay, let's observe his passage. [*They conceal themselves.*

Enter SPURIO *and Servants.*

SPU. <O, but are you sure on't?

SER. My lord, most sure on't; for 'twas spoke by one
That is most inward with the duke's son's lust, [211
That he intends within this hour to steal
Unto Hippolito's sister, whose chaste life
The mother has corrupted for his use.>

SPU. <Sweet word! sweet occasion! faith, then, brother,
I'll disinherit you in as short time
As I was when I was begot in haste.
I'll damn you at your pleasure: precious deed! [220
After your lust, O, 'twill be fine to bleed.
[*To the Servants.*] Come, let our passing out be soft and wary.> [*Exeunt* SPURIO *and Servants.*

VIN. Mark there! there! that step; now to the duchess!
This their second meeting writes the duke cuckold
With new additions—his horns newly revived. [230
Night! thou that look'st like funeral heralds' fees,
Torn down betimes i' th' morning, thou hang'st fitly
To grace those sins that have no grace at all.
Now 'tis full sea abed over the world:
There's juggling of all sides; some that were maids
E'en at sunset, are now perhaps i' th' toll-book. [241
This woman in immodest thin apparel
Lets in her friend by water; here a dame,
Cunning, nails leather hinges to a door,
To avoid proclamation.

Now cuckolds are a-coining, apace, apace, apace, apace!
And careful sisters spin that thread i' th' night
That does maintain them and their bawds i' th' day.
HIP. You flow well, brother.
VIN. Puh! I'm shallow yet;
Too sparing and too modest; shall I tell thee?
If every trick were told that's dealt by night,
There are few here that would not blush outright.
HIP. I am of that belief too. Who's this comes?
VIN. The duke's son up so late? Brother, fall back,
And you shall learn some mischief. My good lord!

Enter LUSSURIOSO.

LUS. Piato! why, the man I wished for! Come,
I do embrace this season for the fittest
To taste of that young lady.
VIN. <Heart and hell!>
HIP. <Damned villain!>
VIN. <I have no way now to cross it,
But to kill him.>
LUS. Come, only thou and I.
VIN. My lord! my lord!
LUS. Why dost thou start us?
VIN. I'd almost forgot—the bastard!
LUS. What of him?
VIN. This night, this hour, this minute, now—
LUS. What? what?
VIN. Shadows the duchess—
LUS. Horrible word!
VIN. And (like strong poison) eats
Into the duke your father's forehead.
LUS. O!
VIN. He makes horn-royal.
LUS. Most ignoble slave!
VIN. This is the fruit of two beds.
LUS. I am mad.
VIN. That passage he trod warily.
LUS. He did?
VIN. And hushed his villains every step he took.
LUS. His villains! I'll confound them.
VIN. Take 'em finely—
Finely now.
LUS. The duchess' chamber-door shall not control me. [*Exeunt* LUSSURIOSO *and* VINDICI.
HIP. Good, happy, swift: there's gunpowder i' th' court,
Wildfire at midnight. In this heedless fury
He may show violence to cross himself.
I'll follow the event. [*Exit.*

SCENE III

The scene is changed to the DUCHESS' *bed-chamber. The* DUKE *and* DUCHESS *are in bed.*

LUSSURIOSO *bursts in, followed by* VINDICI, *and, at a distance, by* HIPPOLITO.

LUS. <Where is that villain?
VIN. Softly, my lord, and you may take 'em twisted.
LUS. I care not how.
VIN. O! 'twill be glorious
To kill 'em doubled, when they're heaped. Be soft, my lord.
LUS. Away! my spleen is not so lazy: thus and thus
I'll shake their eyelids ope, and with my sword
Shut 'em again for ever.> Villain! strumpet!
DUKE, *calling*. You upper guard, defend us!
DUCH., *screaming*. Treason! treason!
DUKE. O, take me not in sleep! I have great sins;
I must have days,
Nay, months, dear son, with penitential heaves,
To lift 'em out, and not to die unclear.
O, thou wilt kill me both in Heaven and here.
LUS. I am amazed to death.
DUKE. Nay, villain, traitor,
Worse than the foulest epithet; now I'll gripe thee
E'en with the nerves of wrath, and throw thy head
Amongst the lawyers!—[*Calling.*] Guard!

Enter Ambitioso, Supervacuo, *and* Nobles.

1 Noble. How comes the quiet of your grace disturbed?
Duke. This boy, that should be myself after me,
Would be myself before me; and in heat
Of that ambition bloodily rushed in,
Intending to depose me in my bed.
2 Noble. Duty and natural loyalty forfend!
Duch. He called his father villain, and me strumpet,
A word that I abhor to file my lips with.[12]
Amb. That was not so well done, brother.
Lus. I am abused.
<I know there's no excuse can do me good.>
Vin., *to* Hippolito. <'Tis now good policy to be from sight;
His vicious purpose to our sister's honor
Is crossed beyond our thought.
Hip. You little dreamt
His father slept here.
Vin. O, 'twas far beyond me;
But, since it fell so—without frightful words—
Would he had killed him; 'twould have eased our swords.> [*Exeunt* Vindici *and* Hippolito.
Duke. Be comforted, our duchess, he shall die.
Lus. Where's this slave-pander now? out of mine eye,
Guilty of this abuse.

Enter Spurio *with Servants.*

Spu. <Y'are villains, fablers!
You have knaves' chins and harlots' tongues; you lie;
And I will damn you with one meal a day.
1 Ser. O good my lord!
Spu. 'Sblood, you shall never sup.
2 Ser. O, I beseech you, sir!
Spu. To let my sword
Catch cold so long, and miss him!
1 Ser. Troth, my lord,
'Twas his intent to meet there.>
Spu. <Heart! he's yonder.
Ha, what news here? is the day out o' th' socket,
That it is noon at midnight? the court up?
How comes the guard so saucy with his elbows?>
Lus. <The bastard here?
Nay, then the truth of my intent shall out.>
My lord and father, hear me.
Duke. Bear him hence.
Lus. I can with loyalty excuse—
Duke. Excuse?
To prison with the villain! Death shall not long
Lay after him.
Spu. Good, i' faith: then 'tis not much amiss.
Lus. Brothers, my best release lies on your tongues;
I pray, persuade for me.
Amb. It is our duties.
Make yourself sure of us.
Sup. We'll sweat in pleading.
Lus. And I may live to thank you.
[*Exit, with* Nobles.
Amb. <No, thy death
Shall thank me better.>
Spu. <He's gone; I'll after him,
And know his trespass; seem to bear a part
In all his ills, but with a puritan heart.>
[*Exit, with* Servants.
Amb. <Now, brother, let our hate and love be woven
So subtlely together that, in speaking
One word for his life, we may make three for his death:
The craftiest pleader gets most gold for breath.
Sup. Set on, I'll not be far behind you, brother.>
Duke. Is't possible a son
Should be disobedient as far as the sword?
It is the highest: he can go no farther.
Amb. My gracious lord, take pity—
Duke. Pity, boys!

[12] Apparently the Duchess settles down to sleep after this; for we hear no more from or of her.

AMB. Nay, we'd be loth to move your grace too much;
We know the trespass is unpardonable,
Black, wicked, and unnatural.
SUP. In a son!
O, monstrous! [140
AMB. Yet, my lord, a duke's soft hand
Strokes the rough head of law, and makes it lie smooth.
DUKE. But my hand shall ne'er do't.
AMB. That as you please, my lord.
SUP. We must needs confess,
Some father would have entered into hate
So deadly-pointed, that before his eyes
He would ha' seen the execution sound
Without corrupted favor. [151
AMB. But, my lord,
Your grace may live the wonder of all times,
In pard'ning that offence which never yet
Had face to beg a pardon.
DUKE. <Honey! how's this?>
AMB. Forgive him, good my lord; he's your own son;
And, I must needs say, 'twas the viler done. [161
SUP. He's the next heir: yet this true reason gathers,
None can possess that dispossess their fathers.
Be merciful!—
DUKE. <Here's no step-mother's wit;
I'll try 'em both upon their love and hate.>
AMB. Be merciful, although— [170
DUKE. You have prevailed:
My wrath, like flaming wax, hath spent itself;
I know it was but some peevish moon in him:
Go, let him be released.
SUP. <'Sfoot! how now, brother?>
AMB. Your grace doth please to speak beside your spleen;
I would it were so happy. [180
DUKE. Why, go, release him.
SUP. O my good lord! I know the fault's too weighty
And full of general loathing; too inhuman;
Rather by all men's voices worthy death.
DUKE. 'Tis true too; here, then, receive this signet:
Doom shall pass;
Direct it to the judges: he shall die [190
Ere many days. Make haste.
AMB. All speed that may be.
We could have wished his burden not so sore:
We knew your grace did but delay before.
[*Exeunt* AMBITIOSO *and* SUPERVACUO.
DUKE. <Here's envy with a poor thin cover on't;
Like scarlet hid in lawn, easily spied through. [200
This their ambition by the mother's side
Is dangerous, and for safety must be purged.
I will prevent their envies; sure it was
But some mistaken fury in our son,
Which these aspiring boys would climb upon:
He shall be released suddenly.>

Enter NOBLES.

1 NOBLE. Good morning[13]
To your grace. [211
DUKE. Welcome, my lords.
2 NOBLE. Our knees shall take
Away the office of our feet for ever,
Unless your grace bestow a father's eye
Upon the clouded fortunes of your son,
And in compassionate virtue grant him that,
Which makes e'en mean men happy—liberty. [220
DUKE. <How seriously their loves and honors woo
For that which I am about to pray them do!>
Arise, my lords; your knees sign his release.
We freely pardon him.
1 NOBLE. We owe your grace much thanks, and he much duty.
[*Exeunt* NOBLES. [230
DUKE. <It well becomes that judge to nod at crimes,

[13] The passage of time has been as rapid as in "Macbeth," III 4, and many another Shakespeare play.

That does commit greater himself, and lives.
I may forgive a disobedient error,
That expect pardon for adultery,
And in my old days am a youth in lust.
Many a beauty have I turned to poison
In the denial, covetous of all.
Age hot is like a monster to be seen;
My hairs are white; and yet my sins are green.>

ACT THREE

Scene I

Supervacuo *and* Ambitioso *do not mean to waste their opportunities, and the former understands the value of time.*

Sup. Brother, let my opinion sway you once;
I speak it for the best, to have him die
Surest and soonest; if the signet come
Unto the judge's hand, why then his doom
Will be deferred till sittings and court-days,
Juries, and further. Faiths are bought and sold;
Oaths in these days are but the skin of gold.
Amb. In troth, 'tis true too.
Sup. Then let's set by the judges,
And fall to the officers; 'tis but mistaking
The duke our father's meaning; and, where he named
"Ere many days," 'tis but forgetting that,
And have him die i' th' morning.
Amb. Excellent!
Then am I heir! duke in a minute!
Sup. <Nay,
An he were once puffed out, here is a pin
Should quickly prick your bladder.>
Amb. Blest occasion!
He being packed, we'll have some trick and wile
To wind our younger brother out of prison,
That lies in for the rape. The lady's dead,
And people's thoughts will soon be buriëd.
Sup. We may with safety do't, and live and feed;
The duchess' sonnës[1] are too proud to bleed.
Amb. We are, i' faith, to say true—come, let's not linger:
I'll to the officers; go you before,
And set an edge upon the executioner.
Sup. Let me alone to grind. [*Exit.*
Amb. Meet farewell!
I am next now; I rise just in that place,
Where thou'rt cut off; upon thy neck, kind brother:
The falling of one head lifts up another.
[*Exit.*

Scene II

The Nobles *have got in ahead of* Ambitioso *and* Supervacuo, *and have already freed* Lussurioso, *who is now with them in the courtyard of the prison to which he was taken.*

Lus. My lords, I am so much indebted to your loves
For this, O, this delivery—
1 Noble. Put our duties,
My lord, unto the hopes that grow in you.
Lus. If e'er I live to be myself, I'll thank you.
O liberty, thou sweet and heavenly dame!
But "hell" for prison is too mild a name.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene III

A little later we see Ambitioso *and* Supervacuo *in the entrance to the prison, with* Officers *of the prison.*

Amb. Officers, here's the duke's signet, your firm warrant,
Brings the command of present death along with it
Unto our brother, the duke's son; we are sorry
That we are so unnaturally employed
In such an unkind office, fitter far
For enemies than brothers.
Sup. But, you know,
The duke's command must be obeyed.

[1] sons.

1 Off. It must and shall, my lord. This morning, then—
So suddenly?
Amb. Ay, alas! poor, good soul!
He must break fast betimes; the executioner [20
Stands ready to put forth his cowardly valor.
2 Off. Already?
Sup. Already, i' faith. O sir, destruction hies,
And that is least impúdent,[2] soonest dies.
1 Off. Troth, you say true. My lord, we take our leave.
Our office shall be sound; we'll not delay
The third part of a minute. [30
Amb. Therein you show
Yourselves good men and upright. Officers,
Pray, let him die as private as he may;
Do him that favor; for the gaping people
Will but trouble him at his prayers,
And make him curse and swear, and so die black.
Will you be so far kind? [40
1 Off. It shall be done, my lord.
Amb. Why, we do thank you; if we live to be— [*Checks himself.*
You shall have a better office.
2 Off. Your good lordship—
Sup. Commend us to the scaffold in our tears.
1 Off. We'll weep, and do your commendatiöns. [*Exeunt* Officers.
Amb. Fine fools in office! [50
Sup. Things fall out so fit!
Amb. So happily! come, brother! ere next clock,
His head will be made serve a bigger block.[3] [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV

The Keeper *is in the prison with the* Duchess' Youngest Son.

Y. Son. Keeper!
Keep. My lord.
Y. Son. No news lately from our brothers?
Are they unmindful of us?
Keep. My lord, a messenger came newly in, [9
And brought this from 'em. [*Gives letter.*
Y. Son. Nothing but paper-comforts? I looked for my delivery before this,
Had they been worth their oaths.—Prythee, be from us.—[*Exit* Keeper.
Now what say you, forsooth? speak out, I pray.
"Brother, be of good cheer." 'Slud, it begins like a whore with good cheer. "Thou shalt not be long a prisoner." Not six- [20 and-thirty year, like a banquerout—I think so. "We have thought upon a device to get thee out by a trick." By a trick! pox o' your trick, an it be so long a-playing. "And so rest comforted, be merry, and expect it suddenly!" Be merry! hang "merry," draw and quarter "merry"; I'll be mad. [*Tears the letter into fragments.*] Is't not strange that a man should lie-in a whole month for a [30 woman? Well, we shall see how sudden our brothers will be in their promise. I must expect still a trick: I shall not be long a prisoner.

Re-enter Keeper.

How now, what news?
Keep. Bad news, my lord; I am discharged of you.
Y. Son. Slave! call'st thou that bad news? I thank you, brothers. [40
Keep. My lord, 'twill prove so. Here come the officers,
Into whose hands I must commit you.
Y. Son. Ha, officers! what? why?

Enter Officers.

1 Off. You must pardon us, my lord: Our office must be sound: here is our warrant,
The signet from the duke; you must straight suffer. [50
Y. Son. Suffer! I'll suffer you to begone; I'll suffer you
To come no more; what would you have me suffer?
2 Off. My lord, those words were better changed to prayers.

[2] "imprudent" has been suggested.
[3] hat.

The time's but brief with you: prepare to die.
Y. Son. Sure, 'tis not so!
3 Off. It is too true, my lord.
Y. Son. I tell you 'tis not; for the duke my father
Deferred me till next sitting; and I look,
E'en every minute, threescore times an hour,
For a release, a trick wrought by my brothers.
1 Off. A trick, my lord! if you expect such comfort,
Your hope's as fruitless as a barren woman:
Your brothers were the unhappy messengers
That brought this powerful token for your death.
Y. Son. My brothers? no, no.
2 Off. 'Tis most true, my lord.
Y. Son. My brothers to bring a warrant for my death!
How strange this shows!
3 Off. There's no delaying time.
Y. Son. Desire 'em hither: call 'em up. My brothers!
They shall deny it to your faces.
1 Off. My lord,
They're far enough by this; at least at court;
And this most strict command they left behind 'em.
When grief swum in their eyes, they showed like brothers,
Brimful of heavy sorrow; but the duke
"Must have his pleasure."
Y. Son. His pleasure!
1 Off. These were their last words which my memory bears,
"Commend us to the scaffold in our tears."
Y. Son. Pox dry their tears! what should I do with tears?
I hate 'em worse than any citizen's son
Can hate salt water. Here came a letter now,
New bleeding from their pens, scarce stinted yet:
Would I'd been torn in pieces when I tore it!
[*Picking up some of the pieces.*] Look, you officious whoresons, words of comfort:
"Not long a prisoner."
1 Off. It says true in that, sir;
For you must suffer presently.
Y. Son. A villainous Duns
Upon the letter! knavish exposition!
Look you then here, sir: "we'll get thee out by a trick," says he.
2 Off. That may hold too, sir; for you know a trick
Is commonly four cards, which was meant by us four officers.
Y. Son. Worse and worse dealing.
1 Off. The hour beckons us.
The headsman waits: lift up your eyes to Heaven.
Y. Son. I thank you, faith; good pretty wholesome counsel!
I should look up to Heaven, as you said,
Whilst he behind me cozens me of my head.
Ay, that's the trick.
3 Off. You delay too long, my lord.
Y. Son. Stay, good authority's bastards; since I must,
Through brothers' perjury, die, O, let me venom
Their souls with curses.
3 Off. Come, 'tis no time to curse.
Y. Son. Must I bleed then without respect of sign?
Well,
My fault was sweet sport which the world approves;
I die for that which every woman loves.
[*He is taken off to his well-deserved doom.*

Scene V

Vindici (*as* Piato) *and* Hippolito *meet in a lodge in the grounds of the palace.*

Vin. O, sweet, delectable, rare, happy, ravishing!
Hip. Why, what's the matter, brother?
Vin. O, 'tis able
To make a man spring up and knock his forehead
Against yon silver ceiling.
Hip. Prythee, tell me;

Why may not I partake with you? you vowed once
To give me share to every tragic thought.
VIN. By th' mass, I think I did too;
Then I'll divide it to thee: the old duke,
Thinking my outward shape and inward heart
Are cut out of one piece (for he that prates his secrets,
His heart stands a' th' outside), hires me by price [21
To greet him with a lady
In some fit place, veiled from the eyes o' th' court,
Some darkened, blushless angle, that is guilty
Of his forefather's lust and great folks' riots;
To which I easily (to maintain my shape) [30
Consented, and did wish his impudent grace
To meet her here in this unsunnëd lodge,
Wherein 'tis night at noon; and here the rather
Because, unto the torturing of his soul,
The bastard and the duchess have appointed
Their meeting too in this luxurious circle;
Which most afflicting sight will kill his eyes, [41
Before we kill the rest of him.
HIP. 'Twill, i' faith.
Most dreadfully digested!
I see not how you could have missed me, brother.
VIN. True; but the violence of my joy forgot it.
HIP. Ay, but where's that lady now?
VIN. O! at that word [50
I'm lost again; you cannot find me yet:
I'm in a throng of happy apprehensions:
He's suited for a lady; I have took care
For a delicious lip, a sparkling eye—
You shall be witness, brother:
Be ready: stand with your hat off. [*Exit.*
HIP. Troth, I wonder
What lady it should be; yet 'tis no wonder,
Now I think again, to have a lady [60
Stoop to a duke, that stoops unto his men:
'Tis common to be common through the world;
And there's more private common shadowing vices,
Than those who are known both by their names and prices.
'Tis part of my allegiance to stand bare
To the duke's concubine; and here she comes. [71

Re-enter VINDICI, *with the skull of his Betrothed dressed up in tires.*

VIN., *pretending to be answering her.* Madam, his grace will not be absent long.
Secret? ne'er doubt us, madam; 'twill be worth
Three velvet gowns to your ladyship. Known! [89
Few ladies respect that disgrace: a poor thin shell!
'Tis the best grace you have to do it well.
I'll save your hand that labor: I'll unmask you!
HIP. Why, brother, brother!
VIN. Art thou beguiled now? tut, a lady can, [89
At such, all hid, beguile a wiser man.
Have I not fitted the old surfeiter
With a quaint piece of beauty? Age and bare bone
Are e'er allied in action. Here's an eye,
Able to tempt a great man—to serve God;
A pretty hanging lip, that has forgot now to dissemble.
Methinks this mouth should make a swearer tremble; [100
A drunkard clasp his teeth, and not undo 'em,
To suffer wet damnation to run through 'em.
Here's a cheek keeps her color, let the wind go whistle:
Spout, rain, we fear thee not: be hot or cold, [108
All's one with us; and is not he absurd,
Whose fortunes are upon their faces set,

That fear no other god but wind and wet?
Hip. Brother, y'ave spoke that right:
Is this the form that, living, shone so bright?
Vin. The very same.
And now methinks I could e'en chide myself
For doting on her beauty, though her death [120
Shall be revenged after no common action.—
Does the silkwórm expend her yellow labors
For thee? For thee does she undo herself?
Are lordships sold to maintain ladyships,
For the poor benefit of a bewitching minute? [129
Why does yon fellow falsify highways,
And put his life between the judge's lips,
To refine such a thing; keeps horse and men
To beat their valors for her? surely we are all
Mad people, and they whom we think are, are not:
We mistake those;
'Tis we are mad in sense, they but in clothes. [140
Hip. Faith, and in clothes too we, give us our due.
Vin. Does every proud and self-affecting dame
Camphire her face for this, and grieve her Maker
In sinful baths of milk, when many an infant starves
For her superfluous outside—all for this?
Who now bids twenty pound a night? prepares [151
Music, perfumes, and sweetmeats? All are hushed.
Thou may'st lie chaste now! it were fine, methinks,
To have thee seen at revels, forgetful feasts,
And unclean brothels! sure, 'twould fright the sinner,
And make him a good coward; put [160 a reveller
Out of his antic amble,
And cloy an epicure with empty dishes.
Here might a scornful and ambitious woman
Look through and through herself. See, ladies, with false forms
You deceive men, but cannot deceive worms.— [169
Now to my tragic business. Look you, brother,
I have not fashioned this only for show
And useless property; no, it shall bear a part
E'en in its own revenge. This very skull,
Whose mistress the duke poisoned, with this drug,
The mortal curse of the earth, shall be revenged [180
In the like strain, and kiss his lips to death.
As much as the dumb thing can, he shall feel:
What fails in poison, we'll supply in steel.
Hip. Brother, I do applaud thy constant vengeance,
The quaintness of thy malice, above thought. [190
Vin., *after poisoning the mouth of the skull.* So, 'tis laid on: now come and welcome, duke,
I have her for thee. I protest it, brother,
Methinks she makes almost as fair a fine,[4]
As some old gentlewoman in a periwig.—
Hide thy face now for shame; thou hadst need have a mask now:
'Tis vain when beauty flows; but, when it fleets, [201
This would become graves better than the streets.
Hip. You have my voice in that. Hark, the duke's come.
Vin. Peace, let's observe what company he brings,
And how he does absent 'em; for you know
He'll wish all private. Brother, fall you back a little [211

[4] Should surely be either "as fine a fair" or "a fair as fine."

With the bony lady.
HIP. That I will. [*Retires.*
VIN. So, so;
Now nine years' vengeance crowd into a minute!

Enter DUKE *and* GENTLEMEN.

DUKE. You shall have leave to leave us, with this charge
Upon your lives, if we be missed by [220
th' duchess
Or any of the nobles, to give out
We're privately rid forth.
VIN. <O happiness!>
DUKE. With some few honorable gentlemen, you may say:
You may name those that are away from court.
GEN. Your will and pleasure shall be done, my lord. [*Exeunt* GENTLEMEN. [231
VIN. <"Privately rid forth!"
He strives to make sure work on't.>
Your good grace! [*Advances.*
DUKE. Piato, well done, hast brought her? what lady is't?
VIN. Faith, my lord, a country lady, a little bashful at first, as most of them are; but after the first kiss, my lord, the worst is past with them. Your grace [240 knows now what you have to do; she's somewhat a grave look with her; but—
DUKE. I love that best; conduct her.
VIN. <Have at all!>
DUKE. In gravest looks the greatest faults seem less.
Give me that sin that's robed in holiness.
VIN. Back with the torch! brother, raise the perfumes.
DUKE. How sweet can a duke breathe! Age has no fault. [251
Pleasure should meet in a perfumëd mist.—
Lady, sweetly encountered: I came from court,
I must be bold with you. O, what's this? O!
VIN. Royal villain! white devil!
DUKE. O!
VIN. Brother, place the torch here, [260 that his affrighted eyeballs
May start into those hollows.— Duke, dost know
Yon dreadful vizard? View it well; 'tis the skull
Of Gloriana, whom thou poisonedst last.
DUKE. O! 't has poisoned me.
VIN. Didst not know that till now?
DUKE. What are you two?
VIN. Villains all three! the very ragged bone [271
Has been sufficiently revenged.
DUKE. O, Hippolito, call treason!
[*He sinks down.*
HIP. Yes, my lord; treason! treason! treason! [*Stamping on him.*
DUKE. Then I'm betrayed.
VIN. Alas! poor lecher: in the hands of knaves,
A slavish duke is baser than his slaves. [280
DUKE. My teeth are eaten out.
VIN. Hadst any left?
HIP. I think but few.
VIN. Then those that did eat are eaten.
DUKE. O my tongue!
VIN. Your tongue? 'twill teach you to kiss closer,
Not like a slobbering Dutchman. You have eyes still: [290
[*Throwing off his disguise.*] Look, monster, what a lady hast thou made me
My once betrothëd wife.
DUKE. Is it thou, villain?
Nay, then—
VIN. 'Tis I, 'tis Vindici, 'tis I.
HIP. And let this comfort thee: our lord and father
Fell sick upon the infection of thy [300 frowns,
And died in sadness: be that thy hope of life.
DUKE. O!
VIN. He had his tongue, yet grief made him die speechless.
Puh! 'tis but early yet; now I'll begin
To stick thy soul with ulcers. I will make [309
Thy spirit grievous sore; it shall not rest,

But, like some pestilent man, toss in thy breast.
Mark me, duke:
Thou'rt a renownëd, high and mighty cuckold.
DUKE. O!
VIN. Thy bastard, thy bastard rides a-hunting in thy brow.
DUKE. Millions of deaths!
VIN. Nay, to afflict thee more,
Here in this lodge they meet for damnëd clips.[5]
Those eyes shall see the incest of their lips.
DUKE. Is there a hell besides this, villains?
VIN. Villain!
Nay, Heaven is just; scorns are the hire of scorns:
I ne'er knew yet adulterer without horns.
HIP. Once, ere they die, 'tis quitted.
VIN. Hark! the music:
Their banquet is prepared, they're coming—
DUKE. O,
Kill me not with that sight!
VIN. Thou shalt not lose
That sight for all thy dukedom.
DUKE. Traitors! murderers!
DUKE. What! is not thy tongue
Eaten out yet? Then we'll invent a silence.
Brother, stifle the torch. [HIPPOLITO *puts out the light.*
DUKE. Treason! murder!
VIN. Nay, faith, we'll have you hushed. Now with thy dagger
Nail down his tongue; and mine shall keep possession
About his heart; if he but gasp, he dies;
We dread not death to quittance injuries.
Brother, if he but wink, not brooking the foul object,
Let our two other hands tear up his lids,
And make his eyes like comets shine through blood.
When the bad bleeds, then is the tragedy good.

[5] embraces.

HIP. Whist, brother! the music's at our ear; they come.

Enter SPURIO, *embracing the* DUCHESS, *loud music playing.*

SPU. Had not that kiss a taste of sin, 'twere sweet.
DUCH. Why, there's no pleasure sweet, but it is sinful.
SPU. True, such a bitter sweetness fate hath given;
Best side to us is the worst side to Heaven.
DUCH. Push! come: 'tis the old duke, thy doubtful father:
The thought of him rubs Heaven in thy way.
But I protest by yonder waxen fire,
Forget him, or I'll poison him.
SPU. Madam, you urge a thought which ne'er had life.
So deadly do I loathe him for my birth,
That if he took me hasped within his bed,
I would add murder to adultery,
And with my sword give up his years to death.
DUCH. Why, now thou'rt sociable; let's in and feast:
Loud'st music sound; pleasure is banquet's guest. [*Exeunt* DUCHESS *and* SPURIO.
DUKE. I cannot brook— [*Dies.*
VIN. The brook is turned to blood.
HIP. Thanks to loud music.
VIN. 'Twas our friend, indeed.
'Tis state in music for a duke to bleed.
The dukedom wants a head, though yet unknown;
As fast as they peep up, let's cut 'em down. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI

In the palace, AMBITIOSO *and* SUPERVACUO *are congratulating themselves upon their supernatural cleverness.*

AMB. Was not his execution rarely plotted?
We are the duke's sons now.
SUP. Ay, you may thank my policy for that.

AMB. Your policy for what?
SUP. Why was't not my invention, [10
brother,
To slip the judges? and, in lesser compass,
Did I not draw the model of his death,
Advising you to sudden officers
And e'en extemporal execution?
AMB. Heart! 'twas a thing I thought on too.
SUP. You thought on't, too! s'foot, slander not your thoughts [20
With glorious untruth; I know 'twas from you.
AMB. Sir, I say, 'twas in my head.
SUP. Ay, like your brains then,
Ne'er to come out as long as you lived.
AMB. You'd have the honor on't, forsooth, that your wit
Led him to the scaffold.
SUP. Since it is my due,
I'll publish't, but I'll ha't in spite of [30
you.
AMB. Methinks, y'are much too bold; you should a little
Remember us, brother, next to be honest duke.
SUP. <Ay, it shall be as easy for you to be duke
As to be honest; and that's never, i' faith.>
AMB. Well, cold he is by this time; and, because [41
We're both ambitious, be it our amity,
And let the glory be shared equally.
SUP. I am content to that.
AMB. This night our younger brother shall out of prison:
I have a trick.
SUP. A trick! prythee, what is't?
AMB. We'll get him out by a wile.
SUP. Prythee, what wile? [50
AMB. No, sir; you shall not know it, till't be done;
For then you'd swear 'twere yours.

Enter an OFFICER.

SUP. How now, what's he?
AMB. One of the officers.
SUP. Desired news!
AMB. How now, my friend?
OFF. My lords, under your pardon, I am allotted [60
To that desertless office, to present you
With the yet bleeding head—
SUP. <Ha, ha! excellent!>
AMB. <All's sure our own: brother, canst weep, think'st thou?
'Twould grace our flattery much; think of some dame:
'Twill teach thee to dissemble.
SUP. I have thought.
Now for yourself.> [70
AMB. Our sorrows are so fluent,
Our eyes o'erflow our tongues; words spoke in tears
Are like the murmurs of the waters—the sound
Is loudly heard, but cannot be distinguished.
SUP. How died he, pray?
OFF. O, full of rage and spleen.
SUP. He died most valiantly, then; we're glad to hear it. [81
OFF. We could not woo him once to pray.
AMB. He showed himself a gentleman in that:
Give him his due.
OFF. But, in the stead of prayer,
He drew forth oaths.
SUP. Then did he pray, dear heart,
Although you understood him not. [90
OFF. My lords,
E'en at his last, with pardon be it spoke,
He cursed you both.
SUP. He cursed us? 'las, good soul!
AMB. It was not in our powers, but the duke's pleasure.
<Finely dissembled at both sides. Sweet fate!
O happy opportunity!> [99

Enter LUSSURIOSO.

LUS. Now, my lords.
AMB. AND SUP. O!—
LUS. Why do you shun me, brothers? You may come nearer now:
The savor of the prison has forsook me:
I thank such kind lords as yourselves, I'm free.
AMB. Alive!

SUP. In health!
AMB. Released! [110
We were both e'en
Amazed with joy to see it.
LUS. I am much to thank you.
SUP. Faith, we spared no tongue unto my lord the duke.
AMB. I know your delivery, brother,
Had not been half so sudden but for us.
SUP. O, how we pleaded!
LUS. Most deserving brothers!
In my best studies I will think of it. [120
[*Exit.*
AMB. O death and vengeance!
SUP. Hell and torments!
AMB. Slave, cam'st thou to delude us?
OFF. Delude you, my lords?
SUP. Ay, villain, where's his head now?
OFF. Why here, my lord;
Just after his delivery, you both came
With warrant from the duke to behead your brother. [130
AMB. Ay, our brother, the duke's son.
OFF. The duke's son,
My lord, had his release before you came.
AMB. Whose head's that, then?
OFF. His whom you left command for, your own brother's.
AMB. Our brother's? O, furies!
SUP. Plagues!
AMB. Confusions!
SUP. Darkness [140
AMB. Devils!
SUP. Fell it out so accursedly?
AMB. So damnedly?
SUP. Villain, I'll brain thee with it.
OFF. O my good lord!
SUP. The devil overtake thee! [*Exit* OFFICER.
AMB. O fatal!
SUP. O prodigious to our bloods!
AMB. Did we dissemble? [150
SUP. Did we make our tears
Women for thee?
AMB. Laugh and rejoice for thee?
SUP. Bring warrant for thy death?
AMB. Mock off thy head?
SUP. You had a trick: you had a wile, forsooth.
AMB. A murrain meet 'em! there's none of these wiles
That ever come to good: I see now, there's [160
Nothing sure in mortality, but mortality.
Well, no more words: shalt be revenged, i' faith.—
Come, throw off clouds; now, brother, think of vengeance,
And deeper-settled hate.—Sirrah, sit fast,
We'll pull down all, but thou shalt down at last. [*Exeunt.* [170

ACT FOUR

SCENE I

LUSSURIOSO *is in the grounds of the palace, struggling with unpleasant thoughts.* HIPPOLITO *is standing apart.*

LUS. Hippolito!
HIP. My lord, has your good lordship
Aught to command me in?
LUS. I prythee, leave us!
HIP. <How's this? come, and leave us!>
LUS. Hippolito! [10
HIP. Your honor,
I stand ready for any duteous employment.
LUS. Heart! what mak'st thou here?
HIP. <A pretty lordly humor!
He bids me to be present to depart;
Something has stung his honor.>
LUS. Be nearer; draw nearer:
Y'are not so good, methinks; I'm angry with you. [20
HIP. With me, my lord? I'm angry with myself for't.
LUS. You did prefer a goodly fellow to me:
'Twas wittily elected; 'twas. I thought
He'd been a villain, and he proves a knave—
To me a knave.
HIP. I chose him for the best, my lord:
'Tis much my sorrow, if neglect in him
Breed discontent in you. [31
LUS. Neglect! 'twas will.
Judge of it.
Firmly to tell of an incredible act.
Not to be thought, less to be spoken of,

'Twixt my step-mother and the bastard; oh!
Incestuous sweets between 'em.
HIP. Fie, my lord!
LUS. I, in kind loyalty to my father's forehead, [41
Made this a desperate arm; and in that fury
Committed treason on the lawful bed,
And with my sword e'en razed my father's bosom,
For which I was within a stroke of death.
HIP. Alack! I'm sorry. <'Sfoot, just upon the stroke,
Jars in my brother; 'twill be villain- [50
ous music.>

Enter VINDICI, *disguised as* PIATO.

VIN. My honored lord.
LUS. Away! prythee, forsake us:
Hereafter we'll not know thee.
VIN. Not know me, my lord!
Your lordship cannot choose.
LUS. Begone, I say:
Thou art a false knave.
VIN. Why, the easier to be known, my lord. [61
LUS. Push! I shall prove too bitter; with a word
Make thee a perpetual prisoner,
And lay this iron age upon thee.
VIN. Mum!
For there's a doom would make a woman dumb.
<Missing the bastard—next him—the wind's come about: [70
Now 'tis my brother's turn to stay; mine to go out.[1]> [*Exit.*
LUS. He's greatly moved me.
HIP. Much to blame, i' faith!
LUS. But I'll recover, to his ruin. 'Twas told me lately,
I know not whether falsely, that you'd a brother.
HIP. Who, I? yes, my good lord, I have a brother. [80
LUS. How chance the court ne'er saw him? of what nature?
How does he apply his hours?

[1] Perhaps this couplet should be:
Missing the bastard vexed him. The wind's come about:
'Tis my brother's turn to stay; mine, to go out.

HIP. Faith, to curse fates
Who, as he thinks, ordained him to be poor—
Keeps at home, full of want and discontent.
LUS. <There's hope in him; for discontent and want [90
Is the best clay to mould a villain of.>
Hippolito, wish him repair to us:
If there be aught in him to please our blood,
For thy sake we'll advance him, and build fair
His meanest fortunes; for it is in us
To rear up towers from cottages.
HIP. It is so, my lord:
He will attend your honor; but he's a man [101
In whom much melancholy dwells.
LUS. Why, the better;
Bring him to court.
HIP. With willingness and speed.
<Whom he cast off e'en now, must now succeed.—
Brother, disguise must off;
In thine own shape now I'll prefer thee to him: [110
How strangely does himself work to undo him!> [*Exit.*
LUS. This fellow will come fitly; he shall kill
That other slave, that did abuse my spleen,
And made it swell to treason. I have put
Much of my heart into him; he must die.
He that knows great men's secrets, and proves slight,[2] [121
That man ne'er lives to see his beard turn white.
Ay, he shall speed him: I'll employ the brother;
Slaves are but nails to drive out one another.
He being of black condition, suitable
To want and ill-content, hope of preferment [130
Will grind him to an edge.

Enter two NOBLES.

1 NOBLE. Good days unto your honor.

[2] untrustworthy.

Lus. My kind lords, I do return the like.
2 Noble. Saw you my lord the duke?
Lus. My lord and father!
Is he from court?
1 Noble. He's sure from court; but where,
Which way his pleasure took, we know not;
Nor can we hear on't.
Lus. Here come those should tell.

Enter two other Nobles

Saw you my lord and father?
3 Noble Not since two hours before noon, my lord;
And then he privately rid forth.
Lus. O, he's rode forth.
1 Noble. 'Twas wondrous privately.
2 Noble. There's none i' th' court had any knowledge on't.
Lus. His grace is old and sudden: 'tis no treason
To say the duke, my father, has a humor
Or such a toy about him; what in us
Would appear light in him seems virtuous.
3 Noble. 'Tis oracle, my lord.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene II

The same day, in an apartment in the palace, Vindici, *now like himself, comes to* Hippolito.

Hip. So, so, all's as it should be; y'are yourself.
Vin. How that great villain puts me to my shifts!
Hip. He that did lately in disguise reject thee,
Shall, now thou art thyself, as much respect thee.
Vin. 'Twill be the quainter fallacy. But, brother,
'Sfoot,
What use will he put me to now, think'st thou?
Hip. Nay, you must pardon me in that: I know not.
He has some employment for you; but what 'tis,
He and his secretary (the devil) know best.
Vin. Well, I must suit my tongue to his desires,
What color soe'er they be; hoping at last
To pile up all my wishes on his breast.
Hip. Faith, brother, he himself shows the way.
Vin. Now the duke is dead, the realm is clad in clay.
His death being not yet known, under his name
The people still are governed. Well, thou, his son
Art not long-lived: thou shalt not joy his death.
To kill thee, then, I should most honor thee;
For 'twould stand firm in every man's belief,
Thou'st a kind child, and only died'st with grief.
Hip. You fetch about well; but let's talk in present.
How will you appear in fashion different,
As well as in apparel, to make all things possible?
If you be but once tripped, we fall for ever.
It is not the least policy to be doubtful;
You must change tongue: familiar was your first.
Vin. Why, I'll bear me in some strain of melancholy,
And string myself with heavy-sounding wire,
Like such an instrument that speaks merry things sadly.
Hip. Then 'tis as I meant;
I gave you out at first in discontent.
Vin. I'll tune myself, and then—
Hip. 'Sfoot, here he comes!
Hast thought upon't?
Vin. Salute him; fear not me.

Enter Lussurioso.

Lus. Hippolito!
Hip. Your lordship—
Lus. What's he yonder?

HIP. 'Tis Vindici, my discontented brother,
Whom, 'cording to your will, I have brought to court.
LUS. Is that thy brother? Beshrew me, a good presence;
I wonder 'has been from the court so long.—
Come nearer.
HIP. Brother! Lord Lussurioso,
The duke's son.
LUS. Be more neaï to us; welcome;
Nearer yet.
VIN. How don you? god you god den.
[*Takes off his hat and bows.*
LUS. We thank thee.
<How strangely such a coarse homely salute
Shows in the palace, where we greet in fire;
Nimble and desperate tongues! should we name
God in a salutation, 'twould ne'er be stood on. Heaven![3]>
Tell me, what has made thee so melancholy?
VIN. Why, going to law.
LUS. Why, will that make a man melancholy?
VIN. Yes, to look long upon ink and black buckram. I went me to law in *anno quadragesimo secundo,* and I waded out of it in *anno sexagesimo tertio.*
LUS. What, three-and-twenty years in law?[4]
VIN. I have known those that have been five-and-fifty, and all about pullen[5] and pigs.
LUS. May it be possible such men should breathe,
To vex the terms so much?
VIN. 'Tis food to some, my lord. There are old men at the present that are so poisoned with the affectation of law-words (having had many suits canvassed), that their common talk is nothing but Barbary Latin. They cannot so much as pray but in law, that their sins may be removed with a writ of error, and their souls fetched up to Heaven with a sasarara.
LUS. It seems most strange to me;
Yet all the world meets round in the same bent:
Where the heart's set, there goes the tongue's consent.
How dost apply thy studies, fellow?
VIN. Study? why, to think how a great rich man lies a-dying, and a poor cobbler tolls the bell for him; how he cannot depart the world, and see the great chest stand before him; when he lies speechless, how he will point you readily to all the boxes; and, when he is past all memory, as the gossips guess, then thinks he of forfeitures and obligations; nay, when to all men's hearings he whirls and rattles in the throat, he's busy threat'ning his poor tenants. And this would last me now some seven years' thinking, or thereabouts. But I have a conceit a-coming in picture upon this; I draw it myself, which, i'faith, la, I'll present to your honor; you shall not choose but like it, for your lordship shall give me nothing for it.
LUS. Nay, you mistake me, then,
For I am published bountiful enough.
Let's taste of your conceit.
VIN. In picture, my lord?
LUS. Ay, in picture.
VIN. Marry, this it is: a usuring father to be boiling in hell, and his son and heir with a whore dancing over him.
HIP. <He has pared him to the quick.>
LUS. The conceit's pretty, i' faith;
But, take't upon my life, 'twill ne'er be liked.
VIN. No? why, I'm sure the whore will be liked well enough.
HIP. <Ay, if she were out o' th' picture, he'd like her then himself.>
VIN. And, as for the son and heir, he shall be an eyesore to no young revellers, for he shall be drawn in cloth-of-gold breeches.
LUS. And thou hast put my meaning in the pockets,

[3] There seems to be corruption here.
[4] Lussurioso's arithmetic leaves something to be desired.
[5] poultry.

And canst not draw that out? My thought was this:
To see the picture of a usuring father
Boiling in hell—our rich men would ne'er like it.

VIN. O, true, I cry you heartily mercy, I know the reason, for some of 'em had rather be damned in deed than damned in colors.

LUS. <A parlous melancholy! 'has wit enough
To murder any man; and I'll give him means.>
I think thou art ill-moneyed.

VIN. Money! ho, ho!
'T has been my want so long, 'tis now my scoff:
I've e'en forgot what color silver's of.

LUS. <It hits as I could wish.>

VIN. I get good clothes
Of those that dread my humor; and, for table-room,
I feed on those that cannot be rid of me.

LUS. Somewhat to set thee up withal. [*Gives him money.*

VIN. O mine eyes!

LUS. How now, man?

VIN. Almost struck blind;
This bright unusual shine to me seems proud;
I dare not look till the sun be in a cloud.

LUS. <I think I shall affect[6] his melancholy.>
How are they now?

VIN. The better for your asking.

LUS. You shall be better yet, if you but fasten
Truly on my intent. Now y'are both present,
I will unbrace such a close private villain
Unto your vengeful swords, the like ne'er heard of,
Who hath disgraced you much and injured us.

HIP. Disgraced us, my lord?

LUS. Ay, Hippolito.
I kept it here till now, that both your angers
Might meet him at once.

VIN. I'm covetous
To know the villain.

LUS. You know him: that slave-pander,
Piato, whom we threatened last
With irons in perpetual 'prisonment.

VIN. <All this is I.>

HIP. Is't he, my lord?

LUS. I'll tell you;
You first preferred him to me.

VIN. Did you, brother?

HIP. I did indeed.

LUS. And the ungrateful villain,
To quit that kindness, strongly wrought with me—
Being, as you see, a likely man for pleasure—
With jewels to corrupt your virgin sister.

HIP. O villain!

VIN. He shall surely die that did it.

LUS. I, far from thinking any virgin harm,
Especially knowing her to be as chaste
As that part which scarce suffers to be touched—
Th' eye—would not endure him.

VIN. Would you not, my lord?
'Twas wondrous honorably done.

LUS. But with some fine frowns kept him out.

VIN. Out, slave!

LUS. What did me he, but in revenge of that,
Went of his own free will to make infirm
Your sister's honor (whom I honor with my soul
For chaste respect), and, not prevailing there
(As 'twas but desperate folly to attempt it),
In mere spleen, by the way, waylays your mother,
Whose honor, being a coward as it seems,
Yielded by little force.

VIN. Coward indeed!

LUS. He, proud of their advantage[7] (as he thought),

[6] like.

[7] the advantage won over them.

Brought me this news for happy. But
I, Heaven forgive me for't!—
VIN. What did your honor? [269
LUS. In rage pushed him from me,
Trampled beneath his throat, spurned
him, and bruised:
Indeed I was too cruel, to say troth.
HIP. Most nobly managed!
VIN. <Has not Heaven an ear?
Is all the lightning wasted?>
LUS. If I now
Were so impatient in a modest cause,
What should you be? [279
VIN. Full mad: he shall not live
To see the moon change.
LUS. He's about the palace.
Hippolito,
Entice him this way, that thy brother,
may take
Full mark of him.
HIP. Heart! that shall not need, my
lord:
I can direct him so far.
LUS. Yet, for my hate's sake, [290
Go, wind him this way: I'll see him bleed
myself.
HIP. <What now, brother?
VIN. Nay, e'en what you will.
Y'are put to it, brother.
HIP. An impossible task, I'll swear,
To bring him hither, that's already
here.> [*Exit.*
LUS. Thy name? I have forgot it.
VIN. Vendice, my lord. [300
LUS. 'Tis a good name that.
VIN. Ay, a revenger.
LUS. It does betoken courage; thou
shouldst be valiant,
And kill thine enemies.
VIN. That's my hope, my lord.
LUS. This slave is one.
VIN. I'll doom him.
LUS. Then I'll praise thee.
Do thou observe me best, and I'll best
raise thee. [311

Re-enter HIPPOLITO.

VIN. Indeed, I thank you.
LUS. Now, Hippolito,
Where's the slave-pander?
HIP. Your good lordship
Would have a loathsome sight of him,
much offensive:
He's not in case now to be seen, my lord:
The worst of all the deadly sins is in
him— [321
That beggarly damnation, drunkenness.
LUS. Then he's a double slave.
VIN. <'Twas well conveyed
Upon a sudden wit.>
LUS. What, are you both
Firmly resolved I'll see him dead my-
self.
VIN. Or else let not us live.
LUS. You may direct [330
Your brother to take note of him.
HIP. I shall.
LUS. Rise but in this, and you shall
never fall.
VIN. Your honor's vassals.
LUS. <This was wisely carried.
Deep policy in us makes fools of such:
Then must a slave die, when he knows
too much.> [*Exit.*
VIN. O thou almighty patience! 'tis
my wonder [341
That such a fellow, impudent and wicked,
Should not be cloven as he stood; or
with
A secret wind burst open!
Is there no thunder left: or is't kept up
In stock for heavier vengeance? [*Thun-
der.*] There it goes!
HIP. Brother, we lose ourselves.
VIN. But I have found it; [350
'Twill hold, 'tis sure; thanks, thanks to
any spirit,
That mingled it 'mongst my inventiöns.
HIP. What is't?
VIN. 'Tis sound and good; thou shalt
partake it;
I'm hired to kill myself.
HIP. True.
VIN. Prythee, mark it;
And, the old duke being dead, but not
conveyed, [361
For he's already missed too, and, you
know,
Murder will peep out of the closest
husk—
HIP. Most true.

VIN. What say you then to this device?
If we dressed up the body of the duke—
HIP. In that disguise of yours? [370
VIN. Y'are quick, y'have reached it.
HIP. I like it wondrously.
VIN. And, being in drink, as you have published him,
To lean him on his elbow, as if sleep had caught him,
Which claims most interest in such sluggy men?
HIP. Good yet; but here's a doubt;
We, thought by th' duke's son to kill that pander, [381
Shall, when he is known, be thought to kill the duke.
VIN. Neither, O thanks! it is substantiäl:
For, that disguise being on him which I wore,
It will be thought I, which he calls the pander, did kill the duke, and fled away in his apparel, leaving him so disguised to avoid swift pursuit. [391
HIP. Firmer and firmer.
VIN. Nay, doubt not, 'tis in grain:
I warrant it holds color.
HIP. Let's about it.
VIN. By the way, too, now I think on't, brother,
Let's conjure that base devil out of our mother. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

The DUCHESS *and* SPURIO *enter a corridor in the palace. She links herself arm-in-arm with him, and behaves in a most lascivious manner.*[8] AMBITIOSO *follows them silently and unseen.*

SPU. Madam, unlock yourself;
Should it be seen, your arm would be suspected.
DUCH. Who is't that dare suspect or this or these? [10
May not we deal our favors where we please?
SPU. I'm confident you may. [*Exeunt* DUCHESS *and* SPURIO.

[8] B, "He seemeth lasciviously"; but it is apparent from the text that it is she who is behaving the more brazenly and wantonly.

As they go out at one door, SUPERVACUO *comes running in silently at the one by which they entered. He has his rapier drawn.* AMBITIOSO *stops him.*

AMB. 'Sfoot, brother! hold.
SUP. Wouldst let the bastard shame us? [21
AMB. Hold, hold, brother!
There's fitter time than now.
SUP. Now, when I see it!
AMB. 'Tis too much seen already.
SUP. Seen and known;
The nobler she's, the baser is she grown.
AMB. If she were bent lasciviously (the fault
Of mighty women, that sleep soft), O [30 death!
Must she needs choose such an unequal sinner,
To make all worse?
SUP. A bastard! the duke's bastard!
Shame heaped on shame!
AMB. O our disgrace!
Most women have small waists the world throughout;
But their desires are thousand miles [40 about.
SUP. Come, stay not here; let's after, and prevent,
Or else they'll sin faster than we'll repent. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV

VINDICI *and* HIPPOLITO *are paying their promised visit to their mother's house. They have her by the shoulders; and each has a dagger in his hand.*

VIN. O thou for whom no name is bad enough!
GRA. What mean my sons? what, will you murder me?
VIN. Wicked, unnatural parent!
HIP. Fiend of women! [10
GRA. O! are sons turned monsters? [*Calling.*] Help!
VIN. In vain.
GRA. Are you so barbarous to set iron nipples
Upon the breast that gave you suck?
VIN. That breast

Is turned to quarlëd poison.
GRA. Cut not your days for't! am not I your mother?
VIN. Thou dost usurp that title now by fraud,
For in that shell of mother breeds a bawd.
GRA. "A bawd"! O name far loathsomer than hell!
HIP. It should be so, knew'st thou thy office well.
GRA. I hate it.
VIN. Ah! is't possible? thou only?
You powers on high!
That women should dissemble when they die!
GRA. Dissemble!
VIN. Did not the duke's son direct
A fellow of the world's condition hither,
That did corrupt all that was good in thee?
Made thee uncivilly forget thyself,
And work our sister to his lust?
GRA. Who, I?
That had been monstrous. I defy that man
For any such intent! none lives so pure
But shall be soiled with slander. Good son, believe it not.
VIN. <O, I'm in doubt, whether I am myself or no.>
Stay, let me look again upon this face.
Who shall be saved, when mothers have no grace?
HIP. 'Twould make one half despair.
VIN. I was the man.
Defy me now; let's see, do't modestly.
GRA. O hell unto my soul!
VIN. In that disguise, I, sent from the duke's son,
Tried you, and found you base metal,
As any villain might have done.
GRA. O, no,
No tongue but yours could have bewitched me so.
VIN. O nimble in damnation, quick in tune!
There is no devil could strike fire so soon:
I am confuted in a word.
GRA. O sons,
Forgive me! to myself I'll prove more true;
You that should honor me, I kneel to you. [*Kneels and weeps.*
VIN. A mother to give aim to her own daughter!
HIP. True, brother; how far beyond nature to't,
Though many mothers do't!
VIN. Nay, an you draw tears once, go you to bed;
We will make iron blush and change to red.
Brother, it rains. 'Twill spoil your dagger: house it.
HIP. 'Tis done.
VIN. I' faith, 'tis a sweet shower, it does much good.
The fruitful grounds and meadows of her soul
Have been long dry: pour down, thou blessëd dew!
Rise, mother; troth, this shower has made you higher!
GRA. O you Heavens! take this infectious spot out of my soul,
I'll rinse it in seven waters of mine eyes!
Make my tears salt enough to taste of grace.
To weep is to our sex naturally given;
But to weep truly, that's a gift from Heaven.
VIN. Nay, I'll kiss you now. Kiss her, brother:
Let's marry her to our souls, wherein's no lust,
And honorably love her.
HIP. Let it be.
VIN. For honest women are so seld and rare,
'Tis good to cherish those poor few that are.—
O you of easy wax! do but imagine,
Now the disease has left you, how leprously
That office would have clinged unto your forehead!
All mothers that had any graceful hue
Would have worn masks to hide their face at you.

It would have grown to this: at your foul name,
Green-colored maids would have turned red with shame.
HIP. And then our sister, full of hire and baseness—
VIN. Thefe had been boiling lead again,
The duke's son's great concubine!
A drab of state, a cloth-o'-silver slut,
To have her train borne up, and her soul trail i' th' dirt!
HIP. Great, to be miserably great; rich, to be eternally wretched.
VIN. O common madness!
Ask but the thriving'st harlot in cold blood,
She'd give the world to make her honor good.
Perhaps you'll say, but only to the [9] duke's son
In private; why, she first begins with one,
Who afterward to thousand proves a whore:
Break ice in one place, it will crack in more.
GRA. Most certainly applied!
HIP. O brother, you forget our busïness.
VIN. And well-remembered; joy's a subtle elf:
I think man's happiest when he forgets himself.—
Farewell, once dry, now holy-watered mead;
Our hearts wear feathers, that before wore lead.
GRA. I'll give you this—that one I never knew
Plead better for and 'gainst the devil than you.
VIN. You make me proud on't.
HIP. Commend us in all virtue to our sister.
VIN. Ay, for the love of Heaven, to that true maid.
GRA. With my best words.
VIN. Why, that was motherly said.
[*Exeunt* VINDICI *and* HIPPOLITO.

[9] B, th'.

GRA. I wonder now what fury did transport me!
I feel good thoughts begin to settle in me.
O, with what forehead can I look on her,
Whose honor I've so impiously beset?
And here she comes—

Enter CASTIZA.

CAS. Now, mother, you have wrought with me so strongly,
That, what for my advancement as to calm
The trouble of your tongue, I am content.
GRA. Content, to what?
CAS. To do as you have wished me;
To prostitute my breast to the duke's son;
And put myself to common usury.
GRA. I hope you will not so!
CAS. Hope you I will not?
That's not the hope you look to be saved in.
GRA. Truth, but it is.
CAS. Do not deceive yourself;
I am as you, e'en out of marble wrought.
What would you now? are ye not pleased yet with me?
You shall not wish me to be more lascivious
Than I intend to be.
GRA. Strike not me cold.
CAS. How often have you charged me on your blessing
To be a cursëd woman? When you knew
Your blessing had no force to make me lewd,
You laid your curse upon me; that did more:
The mother's curse is heavy; where that fights,
Suns set in storm, and daughters lose their lights.
GRA. Good child, dear maid, if there be any spark
Of heavenly intellectual fire within thee,
O, let my breath revive it to a flame!
Put not all out with woman's wilful follies.
I am recovered of that foul disease,

That haunts too many mothers; kind, forgive me. [219
Make me not sick in health! If then
My words prevailed, when they were wickedness,
How much more now, when they are just and good?
CAS. I wonder what you mean! are not you she
For whose infect persuasions I could scarce
Kneel out my prayers, and had much ado
In three hours' reading to untwist so [230 much
Of the black serpent as you wound about me?
GRA. 'Tis unfruitful, held tedious, to repeat what's past:
I'm now your present mother.
CAS. Push! [10] 'tis too late.
GRA. Bethink again: thou know'st not what thou say'st.
CAS. No! deny advancement? treasure? the duke's son? [241
GRA. O, see! I spoke those words, and now they poison me!
What will the deed do then?
Advancement? true; as high as shame can pitch!
For treasure, who e'er knew a harlot rich,
Or could build by the purchase of her sin
An hospital to keep her bastards in?
The duke's son! O, when women are [251 young courtiers,
They are sure to be old beggars;
To know the miseries most harlots taste,
Thou'dst wish thyself unborn, when thou art unchaste.
CAS. O mother, let me twine about your neck,
And kiss you, till my soul melt on your lips! [260
I did but this to try you.
GRA. O, speak truth!
CAS. Indeed I did but; [11] for no tongue has force
To alter me from honest.
If maidens would, men's words could have no power;
A virgin's honor is a crystal tower
Which (being weak) is guarded with good spirits; [270
Until she basely yields, no ill inherits.
GRA. O happy child! faith and thy birth hath saved me.
'Mongst thousand daughters, happiest of all others,
Be thou a glass for maids, and I for mothers.

[10] B inserts "now."
[11] B, "not," which may be correct.

ACT FIVE

SCENE I

The DUKE'S *body has been dressed in the clothes* VINDICI *wore as* PIATO, *and is propped up in a sitting posture on a chair on the back stage, which represents a room in the lodge.* VINDICI *and* HIPPOLITO *are standing beside him. The outer stage represents the hall of the lodge.*

VIN. So, so, he leans well; take heed you wake him not, brother. [10
HIP. I warrant you my life for yours.
VIN. That's a good lay, for I must kill myself. Brother, that's I, that sits for me: do you mark it? And I must stand ready here to make away myself yonder. I must sit to be killed, and stand to kill myself. I could vary it not so little as thrice over again; 't has some eight returns, like Michaelmas term.
HIP. That's enow, o' conscience. [20
VIN. But, sirrah, does the duke's son come single?
HIP. No; there's the hell on't: his faith's too feeble to go alone. He brings flesh-flies after him, that will buzz against supper-time, and hum for his coming out.
VIN. Ah, the fly-flop of vengeance beat 'em to pieces! Here was the sweetest occasion, the fittest hour, to have made my revenge familiar with him; show him the body of the duke his father, and how [31 quaintly he died, like a politician, in hugger-mugger,[1] made no man acquainted with it; and in catastrophe slay him over his father's breast; and O, I'm mad to lose such a sweet opportunity!
HIP. Nay, push! prythee, be content!

[1] in secret.

there's no remedy present; may not hereafter times open in as fair faces as this?

VIN. They may, if they can paint so well. [41

HIP. Come now: to avoid all suspicion, let's forsake this room, and be going to meet the duke's son.

VIN. Content: I'm for any weather. [*They step out of the inner room.* Heart! step close: here he comes.

Enter LUSSURIOSO.

HIP. My honored lord!

LUS. O me! you both present? [50

VIN. E'en newly, my lord, just as your lordship entered now: about this place we had notice given he should be, but in some loathsome plight or other.

HIP. Came your honor private?

LUS. Private enough for this; only a few
Attend my coming out.

HIP. <Death rot those few!>

LUS. Stay, yonder's the slave. [60

VIN. Mass, there's the slave, indeed, my lord.
<'Tis a good child: he calls his father slave!>

LUS. Ay, that's the villain, the damned villain.
Softly. Tread easy.

VIN. Pah! I warrant you, my lord, We'll stifle-in our breaths.

LUS. That will do well.— [70
Base rogue, thou sleepest thy last. <'Tis policy
To have him killed in's sleep; for, if he waked,
He would betray all to them.>

VIN. But, my lord—

LUS. Ha, what say'st?

VIN. Shall we kill him now he's drunk?

LUS. Ay, best of all.

VIN. Why, then he will ne'er live to be sober. [81

LUS. No matter, let him reel to hell.

VIN. But being so full of liquor, I fear he will put out all the fire.

LUS. Thou art a mad beast.

VIN. And leave none to warm your lordship's golls[2] withal; for he that dies drunk falls into hell-fire like a bucket of water—qush, qush!

LUS. Come, be ready: nake[3] your [90 swords:
Think of your wrongs; this slave has injured you.

VIN. Troth, so he has, and he has paid well for't.

LUS. Meet with him now.

VIN. You'll bear us out, my lord?

LUS. Pah! am I a lord for nothing, think you? quickly now! [VINDICI *passes into the inner room, followed by his brother.* [101

VIN. Sa, sa, sa, thump! [*Stabs the* DUKE'S *corpse, which falls.*] There he lies.

LUS., *going into the room.* Nimbly done!
Ha!
O, villains, murderers! 'Tis the old duke, my father.

VIN. That's a jest! [110

LUS. What, stiff and cold already!—
O, pardon me to call you from your names:
'Tis none of your deed. That villain Piato,
Whom you thought now to kill, has murdered [him]
And left him thus disguised. [118

HIP. And not unlikely.

VIN. O rascal! was he not ashamed
To put the duke into a greasy doublet?

LUS. He has been stiff and cold; who knows how long?

VIN. <Marry, that I do.>

LUS. No words, I pray, of anything intended.

VIN. O, my lord!

HIP. I would fain have your lordship think that we have small reason to prate. [130

LUS. Faith, thou say'st true; I'll forthwith send to court
For all the nobles, bastard, duchess; tell,[4]
How here by miracle we found him dead,
And in his raiment that foul villain fled.
[*Returns to the front stage, followed by the others.*

[2] hands.

[3] unsheathe=make naked.

[4] B, all.

Vin. That will be the best way, my lord, to clear us all; let's cast about to be clear. [140

Lus., *calling*. Ho! Nencio, Sordido, and the rest!

Enter Servants.

1 Ser. My lord.

2 Ser. My lord.

Lus. Be witnesses of a strange spectacle.

Choosing for private conference that sad room,

We found the duke my father gealed in blood. [151

1 Ser. My lord the duke!—run, hie thee, Nencio:

Startle the court by signifying so much.

[*Exit* Second Servant. *The others go into the inner room.*

Vin. <Thus much by wit a deep revenger can,

When murder's known, to be the clearest man. [160

We're farthest off, and with as bold an eye

Survey his body as the standers-by.>

Lus. My royal father, too basely let blood

By a malevolent slave!

Hip. <Hark! he calls thee slave again.

Vin. 'Has lost: he may.>

Lus. O sight! look hither, see, his [170 lips are gnawn

With poison.

Vin. How! his lips? by the mass, they be.

O villain! O rogue! O slave! O rascal!

Hip. <O good deceit! he quits him with like terms.>

Amb., *within*. Where?

Sup., *within*. Which way? [179

Enter Ambitioso *and* Supervacuo, *with* Nobles *and* Gentlemen.

Amb. Over what roof hangs this prodigious comet

In deadly fire?

Lus. Behold, behold, my lords,

The duke my father's murdered by a vassal

That owes this habit, and here left disguised. [189

Enter Duchess *and* Spurio.

Duch. My lord and husband!

1 Noble. Reverend majesty!

2 Noble. I have seen these clothes often attending on him.

Vin. <That nobleman has been i' th' country, for he does not lie.>

Sup. <Learn of our mother; let's dissemble too:

I am glad he's vanished; so, I hope, are you. [200

Amb. Ay, you may take my word for't.>

Spu. <Old dad dead!

I, one of his cast sins, will send the Fates

Most hearty commendations by his own son;

I'll tug in the new stream, till strength be done.>

Lus. Where be those two that did affirm to us, [210

My lord the duke was privately rid forth?

1 Gent. O, pardon us, my lords; he gave that charge,

Upon our lives, if he were missed at court,

To answer so; he rode not anywhere;

We left him private with that fellow here.

Vin. <Confirmed.> [220

Lus. O Heavens! that false charge was his death.

Impudent beggars! durst you to our face

Maintain such a false answer? Bear him straight

To execution.

1 Gent. My lord!

Lus. Urge me no more

In this: the excuse may be called half the murder. [230

Vin. <Y'have sentenced well.>

Lus. Away; see it be done.

Vin. <Could you not stick? See what confession doth!

Who would not lie, when men are hanged for truth?>

Hip. <Brother, how happy is our vengeance!
Vin. Why, it hits
Past the apprehension of indifferent [240
wits.>
2 Noble. My lord, let post-horse be sent into all places
To entrap the villain.
Vin. <Post-horse, ha, ha!>
1 Noble. My lord, we're something bold to know our duty.
Your father's accidentally departed;
The titles that were due to him meet you. [250
Lus. Meet me! I'm not at leisure, my good lord.
I've many griefs to despatch out o' th' way.
<Welcome, sweet titles!> Talk to me, my lords,
Of sepulchres and mighty emperors' bones;
That's thought for me.
Vin. <So one may see by this [260
How foreign markets go;
Courtiers have feet o' th' nines, and tongues o' th' twelves;
They flatter dukes; and dukes flatter themselves.>
2 Noble. My lord, it is your shine must comfort us.
Lus. Alas! I shine in tears, like the sun in April. [269
1 Noble. You're now my lord's grace.
Lus. "My lord's grace"! I perceive you'll have it so.
2 Noble. 'Tis but your own.
Lus. Then, Heavens, give me grace to be so!
Vin. <He prays well for himself.>
1 Noble. Madam, all sorrows
Must run their circles into joys. No doubt but time [279
Will make the murderer bring forth himself.
Vin. <He were an ass then, i' faith.>
1 Noble. In the mean season,
Let us bethink the latest funeral honors
Due to the duke's cold body. And withal,
Calling to memory our new happiness,
Speed in his royal son: lords, gentlemen,
Prepare for revels.
Vin. <Revels!>
1 Noble. Time hath several falls: [290
Griefs lift up joys; feasts put down funerals.
Lus. Come then, my lords, my favor's to you all.
<The duchess is suspected foully bent;
I'll begin dukedom with her banishment.> [*Exeunt* Lussurioso, Duchess, *and all others save* Vindici, Hippolito, Spurio, Ambitioso, *and* Supervacuo. [300
Hip. <Revels!
Vin. Ay, that's the word: we are firm yet;
Strike one strain more, and then we crown our wit.> [*Exeunt* Vindici *and* Hippolito.
Spu. <Well, have at the fairest mark —so said the duke,
When he begot me; [309
And, if I miss his heart, or near about,
Then have at any; a bastard scorns to be out. [*Exit.*
Amb.[5] Not'st thou that Spurio, brother?
Sup. Yes, I note him, to our shame.
Amb. He shall not live: his hair shall not grow much longer. In this time of revels, tricks may be set afoot. Seest thou yon new moon? it shall outlive the new duke by much; this hand shall dispossess him. Then we're mighty. [320
A mask is treason's licence; that build upon:
'Tis murder's best face, when a vizard's on. [*Exit.*
Sup. Is't so? 'tis very good!
And do you think to be duke then, kind brother?
I'll see fair play; drop one, and there lies t'other.

Scene II

Vindici *and* Hippolito *have resolved to take* Piero *and other* Lords *into their confidence and get them to act with*

[5] This speech and the three remaining ones are attributed wrongly in the original Qq, the two brothers changing places.

them against LUSSURIOSO *and the governing nobles.*

VIN. My lords, be all of music, strike old griefs
Into other countries
That flow in too much milk and have faint livers,
Not daring to stab home their discontents.
Let our hid flames break out as fire, as lightning,
To blast this villainous dukedom, vexed with sin;
Wind up your souls to their full height again.

PIERO. How?

1 LORD.[6] Which way?

2 LORD.[7] Any way: our wrongs are such,
We cannot justly be revenged too much.

VIN. You shall have all enough. Revels are toward,
And those few nobles that have long suppressed you,
Are busied to the furnishing of a masque,
And do affect to make a pleasant tale on't:
The masquing suits are fashioning: now comes in
That which must glad us all. We too take pattern
Of all those suits, the color, trimming, fashion,
E'en to an undistinguished hair almost:
Then ent'ring first, observing the true form,
Within a strain or two we shall find leisure
To steal our swords out handsomely;
And, when they think their pleasure sweet and good,
In midst of all their joys, they shall sigh blood.

PIERO. Weightily, effectually!

3 LORD.[8] Before the t'other maskers come—

VIN. We're gone, all done and past.

PIERO. But how for the duke's guard?

VIN. Let that alone;
By one and one their strengths shall be drunk down.

HIP. There are five hundred gentlemen in the action,
That will apply themselves, and not stand idle.

PIERO. O, let us hug your bosoms!

VIN. Come, my lords,
Prepare for deeds: let other times have words. [*Exeunt.*

[6] B, 1st Servant.
[7] B, 3rd Servant.
[8] B, 3rd Servant.

SCENE III

In a dumb show is shown the installation of the new DUKE, *all his* NOBLES *taking part in the ceremony.*

The DUKE *and his* NOBLES *enter to a banquet in the banqueting-hall of the palace. Despite the glare of torches, a blazing star*[9] *can be seen through the windows.*

1 NOBLE. Many harmonious hours and choicest pleasures
Fill up the royal numbers of your years!

LUS. My lords, we're pleased to thank you, though we know
'Tis but your duty now to wish it so.

1 NOBLE. That shine makes us all happy.

3 NOBLE. <His grace frowns.

2 NOBLE. Yet we must say he smiles.

1 NOBLE. I think we must.>

LUS. <That foul incontinent duchess we have banished;
The bastard shall not live. After these revels,
I'll begin strange ones: he and the stepsons
Shall pay their lives for the first subsidies;
We must not frown so soon, else't had been now.>

1 NOBLE. My gracious lord, please you prepare for pleasure.
The masque is not far off.

LUS. We are for pleasure.
[*Seeing the comet.*] Beshrew thee, what art thou? mad'st me start:
Thou hast committed treason. A blazing star!

[9] a comet.

1 Noble. A blazing star! O, where, my lord?
Lus. Spy out.
2 Noble. See, see, my lords, a wondrous dreadful one!
Lus. I am not pleased at that ill-knotted fire,
That bushing, staring star. Am I not duke?
It should not quake me now. Had it appeared
Before, it I might then have justly feared;
But yet they say, whom art and learning weds,
When stars wear locks, they threaten great men's heads:
Is it so? you are read, my lords.
1 Noble. May it please your grace,
It shows great anger.
Lus. That does not please our grace.
2 Noble. Yet here's the comfort, my lord: many times,
When it seems most [near], it threatens farthest off.
Lus. Faith, and I think so too.
1 Noble. Beside, my lord,
You're gracefully established, with the loves
Of all your subjects; and, for natural death,
I hope it will be threescore years a-coming.
Lus. True. No more but threescore years?
1 Noble. Fourscore, I hope, my lord.
2 Noble. And fivescore, I.
3 Noble. But 'tis my hope, my lord, you shall ne'er die.
Lus. Give me thy hand; these others I rebuke:
He that hopes so is fittest for a duke:
Thou shalt sit next me; take your places, lords;
We're ready now for sports; let 'em set on.—
[*To the star.*] You thing! we shall forget you quite anon!
3 Noble. I hear 'em coming, my lord.

Enter the Masque of revengers: Vindici *and* Hippolito, *with two* Lords.

Lus., *mistaking them for the official masquers.* <Ah, 'tis well!
Brothers and bastard, you dance next in hell!>
[*They dance; at the end they steal out their swords, and stab the four seated at the table. Thunder.*
Vin. <Mark, thunder!—Dost know thy cue, thou big-voiced crier?
Dukes' groans are thunder's watchwords.>
Hip. So, my lords,
You have enough.
Vin. Come, let's away, no lingering.
Hip. Follow! go! [*Exeunt all except* Vindici.
Vin. <No power is angry when the lustful die;
When thunder claps, heaven likes the tragedy.> [*Exit.*
Lus. O, O!

Enter the Masque of intended murderers, Ambitioso, Supervacuo, Spurio, *and a fourth* Noble, *coming in dancing.* Lussurioso *recovers a little, groans, and calls,* "A guard! treason!" *at which the* Dancers *start out of their measure, and, turning towards the table, find them all to be murdered.*

Spu. Whose groan was that?
Lus. Treason! a guard!
Amb. How now? all murdered!
Sup. Murdered!
4 Noble. And those his nobles?
Amb. Here's a labor saved;
I thought to have sped him. 'Sblood, how came this?
Spu. Then I proclaim myself; now I am duke.
Amb. Thou duke! brother, thou liest.
Spu. Slave! so dost thou. [*Kills* Ambitioso.
4 Noble. Base villain! hast thou slain my lord and master? [*Stabs* Spurio.

Re-enter Vindici *and* Hippolito *and the two* Lords.

Vin. Pistols! treason! murder! Help! guard my lord the duke!

Enter ANTONIO *and* GUARD.

HIP. Lay hold upon this traitor.
LUS. O! [140
VIN. Alas! the duke is murdered.
HIP. And the nobles.
VIN. Surgeons! surgeons! <Heart! does he breathe so long?>
ANT. A piteous tragedy! able to make
An old man's eyes bloodshot.
LUS. O!
VIN. Look to my lord the duke. <A vengeance throttle him!>
Confess, thou murd'rous and unhallowed man, [151
Didst thou kill all these?
4 NOBLE. None but the bastard, I.
VIN. How came the duke slain, then?
4 NOBLE. We found him so.
LUS. O villain!
VIN. Hark!
LUS. Those in the masque did murder us.
VIN. La you now, sir! O marble impudence! [161
Will you confess now?
4 NOBLE. 'Slud! 'tis all false.
ANT. Away with that foul monster,
Dipped in a prince's blood.
4 NOBLE. Heart! 'tis a lie.
ANT. Let him have bitter execution.
VIN. <New marrow! no, I cannot be expressed.>
How fares my lord the duke? [170
LUS. Farewell to all;
He that climbs highest has the greatest fall.
My tongue is out of office.
VIN. Air, gentlemen, air. [*The others withdraw.*
<Now thou'lt not prate on't, 'twas Vindici murdered thee.>
LUS. O!
VIN. <Murdered thy father.> [180
LUS. O! [LUSSURIOSO *dies.*
VIN. <And I am he—tell nobody.>
So, so, the duke's departed!
ANT. It was a deadly hand that wounded him.
The rest, ambitious who should rule and sway
After his death, were so made all away.
VIN. My lord was unlikely—
HIP. Now the hope [190
Of Italy lies in your reverend years.
VIN. Your hair will make the silver age again,
When there were fewer, but more honest men.
ANT. The burden's weighty, and will press age down;
May I so rule, that Heaven may keep the crown!
VIN. The rape of your good lady has been quited [201
With death on death.
ANT. Just is the law above.
But of all things it puts me most to wonder
How the old duke came murdered!
VIN. O my lord!
ANT. It was the strangeliest carried: I've not heard[10] the like.
HIP. 'Twas all done for the best, my lord. [211
VIN. All for your grace's good. We may be bold to speak it now, 'twas somewhat witty carried, though we say it—'twas we two murdered him.
ANT. You two?
VIN. None else, i' faith, my lord. Nay, 'twas well-managed.
ANT. Lay hands upon those villains!
VIN. How! on us? [220
ANT. Bear 'em to speedy execution.
VIN. Heart! was't not for your good, my lord?
ANT. My good!
Away with 'em: such an old man as he!—
You, that would murder him, would murder me.
VIN. Is't come about?
HIP. 'Sfoot, brother, you begun.
VIN. May not we set, as well as the duke's son? [231
Thou hast no conscience, are we not revenged?
Is there one enemy left alive amongst those?
'Tis time to die, when we're ourselves our foes:

[10] Q inserts "of."

When murder[er]s shut deeds close, this curse does seal 'em:
If none disclose 'em, they themselves [240
reveal 'em!
This murder might have slept in tongue-less brass,
But for ourselves, and the world died an ass.
Now I remember too, here was Piato
Brought forth a knavish sentence once: no doubt
(Said he)
But time will make the murderer bring forth [251
Himself. 'Tis well he died; he was a witch.—
And now, my lord, since we are in for ever,
This work was ours, which else might have been slipped!
And, if we list, we could have nobles clipped, [259
And go for less than beggars; but we hate
To bleed so cowardly: we have enough, i' faith:
We're well; our mother turned, our sister true;
We die after a nest of dukes. Adieu!
[*He and his brother are taken away by the Guard.*

ANT. How subtly was that murder closed![11] Bear up [270
Those tragic bodies: 'tis a heavy season;
Pray Heaven their blood may wash away all treason! [*Exit.*

[11] disclosed.

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA

BY

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

INTRODUCTION

Shakespeare's second great love-tragedy is called in the folio "Anthony and Cleopatra," as it was called also in the Stationers' Register entry of 1608. We may therefore suppose that it represents Shakespeare's spelling of the name of Marcus Antonius. His source was North's translation of Amyot's French version of Plutarch's "Lives," on which he had already drawn for "Julius Cæsar," and on which he was to draw later for "Coriolanus." No quarto exists, the play first appearing in print in the folio of 1623. The only dramas entered for registration then were ones "not formerly entered to other men" than the publisher Edward Blunt; but here we are met by the strange fact that in May, 1608, Blunt himself had entered "A book called Anthony and Cleopatra." Certainly, it was not among the number "entered to other men;" but not one of those listed with it had been entered at all, so that this play is distinguished from all its companions. The question arises: if Blunt had obtained in 1608 a license to print it, why should he re-enter it in 1623? That is much more singular than it would have been for him to re-enter a play previously entered to somebody else. This brings up the further question: did the entry of 1608 refer to this play? Did it, indeed, refer to a play at all? A dramatic piece was often entered as a "book;" but still we cannot say positively that this "book" was of such a nature. If it was, in truth, a play, it must almost certainly have been Shakespeare's: we can hardly suppose Blunt to have been the publisher or the possessor of two rival plays on the subject.

The question is of very great importance, because on it depends the main argument for the dating of the play. If we accept the entry as referring to Shakespeare's play, "Antony" must date before May, 1608; if we do not, we have a very much wider range of dating. It seems, on the whole, most reasonable to accept the entry, especially as Blunt was mainly a publisher of plays; but we still have to meet the problem why he should have re-registered it. The most plausible explanation would seem to be that a quarto edition has failed to descend to us; but there is not the slightest indication of any such publication, such as would surely have appeared in one or other of the old catalogues. Perhaps it is best to assume that the version published in 1623 was a very different one from that entered for registration in 1608, though

that still leaves unaccounted for the fact that a second fee should have been paid, when the first one should have sufficed. Another stumbling block in the way of the acceptance of that theory is provided by the fact that the play seems all of a piece and gives little or no sign of revision, though there certainly is some of abbreviation. The muteness of Mardian in I 2 and of Ventidius in II 2 may not mean much, and even the fact that III 1 leads nowhere may be without significance; but the muteness of Lamprius (unless, as we probably should, we take him to be identical with the Soothsayer), Rannius, and Lucillius in I 2, when they make their only appearance, is worthy of note. It is probable that these were characters cut out when the play underwent necessary pruning; but they may not impossibly be a remnant of an earlier version. If the date be set down as 1607–8, it is without absolute confidence; and, if the Stationers' Register entry of 1608 could be safely rejected, it would seem natural to allot it to a time a couple of years later.

It is on the character of Cleopatra that the play lives. She is the great *amorosa* of English dramatic literature. She has not the divine youth, the fire, of Juliet; but she is a perfect mistress of the art of love, one who knows every wile in the feminine armory. She has had a wide experience in amorous intrigue, and understands every phase of masculine weakness, and how best to play upon it. The spell she weaves is not the spell of the prostitute, but the spell of personality, the spell of an infinite variety which custom cannot stale. She teases and tenders, tortures and exalts, almost in a breath, and can adapt herself to every mood of her lover, even while imposing upon him her own. So fascinating is she that we feel it is not only Antony whom she captivates, but also Shakespeare himself. Antony is worthy of her; and among the minor characters Enobarbus is notable. The play throughout is magnificent drama, from the masterly opening, in which the keynote is struck, to the affecting and effective close.

It is worth noting that in this play Shakespeare adopts a trick of chorus speeches not usual in his work. It is a trick that was largely practised by Dekker and Field.

CHARACTERS

MARK ANTONY, OCTAVIUS CÆSAR, M. ÆMILIUS LEPIDUS — *Triumvirs.*

SEXTUS POMPEIUS

DOMITIUS ENOBARBUS, VENTIDIUS, EROS, SCARUS, DERCETAS, DEMETRIUS, PHILO — *Friends to Antony*

MECÆNAS, AGRIPPA, DOLABELLA, PROCULEIUS, THYREUS, GALLUS — *Friends to Cæsar.*

MENAS, MENECRATES, VARRIUS — *Friends to Pompey.*

TAURUS, *Lieutenant-General to Cæsar.*

CANIDIUS, *Lieutenant-General to Antony.*

SILIUS, *An Officer under Ventidius.*

EUPHRONIUS, *Ambassador from Antony to Cæsar.*

ALEXAS, MARDIAN, SELEUCUS, DIOMEDES — *Attendants on Cleopatra.*

A SOOTHSAYER.

A CLOWN.

CLEOPATRA, *Queen of Egypt.*

OCTAVIA, *sister to Cæsar.*

CHARMIAN, IRAS — *Attendants on Cleopatra.*

Officers, Soldiers, Messengers, and other Attendants.

PLACE: *Various portions of the Roman Empire*

TIME: *1st Century, B. C.*

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA

ACT ONE

Scene I

ANTONY, *one of the triumvirs of the Roman dominion, has fallen a victim to the charms of* CLEOPATRA, *under whose spell his predecessor,* CÆSAR, *had come.* CÆSAR *risked an empire for her, and* ANTONY *is destined to make the sacrifice. Far from Rome and his colleagues, he does not wish to hear from them or from his wife,* FULVIA, *who has remained in* [9 *Rome. The affairs of the Empire do not interest him while he can dally with the enchanting heiress of the heritage of Ptolemy.*

DEMETRIUS *and* PHILO *are in a room in the Queen's palace in Alexandria, discussing their commander's dotage.*

PHI. Nay, but this dotage of our general's
O'erflows the measure; those his goodly eyes, [20
That o'er the files and musters of the war
Have glowed like plated Mars, now bend, now turn
The office and devotion of their view
Upon a tawny front; his captain's heart,
Which in the scuffles of great fights hath burst
The buckles on his breast, reneges all temper, [29
And is become the bellows and the fan
To cool a gipsy's lust. Look where they come.

Flourish. Enter ANTONY *and* CLEOPATRA, *with their Trains, Eunuchs fanning her.*

Take but good note, and you shall see in him
The triple pillar of the world transformed
Into a strumpet's fool; behold and see.

CLEO. If it be love indeed, tell me how much. [41

ANT. There's beggary in the love that can be reckoned.

CLEO. I'll set a bourn how far to be beloved.

ANT. Then must thou needs find out new heaven, new earth.

Enter an ATTENDANT.

ATT. News, my good lord, from Rome.
ANT. Grates me; the sum. [50
CLEO. Nay, hear them, Antony:
Fulvia, perchance, is angry; or, who knows
If the scarce-bearded Cæsar have not sent
His powerful mandate to you, "Do this, or this;
Take in that kingdom, and enfranchise that;
Perform't, or else we damn thee." [60
ANT. How, my love!
CLEO. Perchance! nay, and most like;
You must not stay here longer; your dismission
Is come from Cæsar; therefore hear it, Antony.
Where's Fulvia's process? Cæsar's I would say; both.—
Call in the messengers.—As I am Egypt's queen, [70
Thou blushest, Antony, and that blood of thine
Is Cæsar's homager; else so thy cheek pays shame
When shrill-tongued Fulvia scolds.—The messengers!
ANT. Let Rome in Tiber melt, and the wide arch
Of the ranged empire fall! Here is my space. [80
Kingdoms are clay; our dungy earth alike

Feeds beast as man; the nobleness of life
Is to do [*embracing her*] thus; when such a mutual pair
And such a twain can do't, in which I bind,
On pain of punishment, the world to weet[1]
We stand up peerless.

CLEO. Excellent falsehood! [90
Why did he marry Fulvia and not love her?
I'll seem the fool I am not; Antony
Will be himself.

ANT. But stirred by Cleopatra.
Now, for the love of Love and her soft hours,
Let's not confound the time with conference harsh:
There's not a minute of our lives should stretch [101
Without some pleasure. Now, what sport to-night?

CLEO. Hear the ambassadors.

ANT. Fie, wrangling queen!
Whom every thing becomes—to chide, to laugh,
To weep—whose every passion fully strives [109
To make itself, in thee, fair and admired.
No messenger; but thine, and all alone,
To-night we'll wander through the streets and note
The qualities of people. Come, my queen;
Last night you did desire it. [*To the* ATTENDANT *who had brought news.*] Speak not to us. [*Exeunt* ANTONY *and* CLEOPATRA, *with their Train.*

DEM. Is Cæsar with Antonius prized so slight? [121

PHI. Sir, sometimes, when he is not Antony,
He comes too short of that great property
Which still should go with Antony.

DEM. I am full sorry
That he approves the common liar, who
Thus speaks of him at Rome; but I will hope [130
Of better deeds to-morrow. Rest you happy. [*Exeunt severally.*

[1] know.

SCENE II

In another room in the palace, CHARMIAN *and* IRAS *are passing the time as best they can.* ALEXAS *and a* SOOTHSAYER *enter, with others.*[2]

CHAR. Lord Alexas, sweet Alexas, most any thing Alexas, almost most absolute Alexas, where's the soothsayer that you praised so to the queen? O that I knew this husband, which, you say, must change his horns with garlands! [10

ALEX. Soothsayer!

SOOTH. Your will?

CHAR. Is this the man?—Is't you, sir, that know things?

SOOTH. In nature's infinite book of secrecy
A little I can read.

ALEX. Show him your hand.

Enter ENOBARBUS.

ENO. Bring in the banquet quickly; wine enough [21
Cleopatra's health to drink.

CHAR. Good sir, give me good fortune.

SOOTH. I make not, but foresee.

CHAR. Pray then, foresee me one.

SOOTH. You shall be yet far fairer than you are.

CHAR. He means in flesh.

IRAS. No, you shall paint when you are old. [30

CHAR. Wrinkles forbid!

ALEX. Vex not his prescience; be attentive.

CHAR. Hush!

SOOTH. You shall be more beloving than beloved.

CHAR. I had rather heat my liver with drinking.

ALEX. Nay, hear him. [39

CHAR. Good now, some excellent fortune! Let me be married to three kings in a forenoon, and widow them all; let me have a child at fifty, to whom Herod of Jewry may do homage; find me to

[2] The folio announces the presence also of Lamprius (who is probably the Soothsayer), Rannius, Lucillius (otherwise unknown) and Mardian.

marry me with Octavius Cæsar, and companion me with my mistress.

SOOTH. You shall outlive the lady whom you serve.

CHAR. O excellent! I love long life better than figs. [50

SOOTH. You have seen and proved a fairer former fortune
Than that which is to approach.

CHAR. Then, belike, my children shall have no names; prithee, how many boys and wenches must I have?

SOOTH. If every of your wishes had a womb,
And fertile every wish, a milliön. [59

CHAR. Out, fool! I forgive thee for a witch.

ALEX. You think none but your sheets are privy to your wishes.

CHAR. Nay, come, tell Iras hers.

ALEX. We'll know all our fortunes.

ENO. Mine, and most of our fortunes, to-night, shall be—drunk to bed.

IRAS. There's a palm presages chastity, if nothing else.

CHAR. E'en as the overflowing Nilus [70 presageth famine.

IRAS. Go, you wild bedfellow, you cannot soothsay.

CHAR. Nay, if an oily palm be not a fruitful prognostication, I cannot scratch mine ear. Prithee, tell her but a worky-day fortune.

SOOTH. Your fortunes are alike.

IRAS. But how? but how? give me particulars. [80

SOOTH. I have said.

IRAS. Am I not an inch of fortune better than she?

CHAR. Well, if you were but an inch of fortune better than I, where would you choose it?

IRAS. Not in my husband's nose.

CHAR. Our worser thoughts heavens mend! Alexas: come, his fortune, his fortune.—O! let him marry a woman [90 that cannot go, sweet Isis, I beseech thee; and let her die too, and give him a worse; and let worse follow worse, till the worst of all following him laughing to his grave, fifty-fold a cuckold! Good Isis, hear me this prayer, though thou deny me a matter of more weight; good Isis, I beseech thee! [98

IRAS. Amen! Dear goddess, hear that prayer of the people! for, as it is a heart-breaking to see a handsome man loose-wived, so it is a deadly sorrow to behold a foul knave uncuckolded: therefore, dear Isis, keep decorum, and fortune him accordingly!

CHAR. Amen!

ALEX. Lo, now! if it lay in their hands to make me a cuckold, they would make themselves whores but they'd do't!

ENO. Hush! here comes Antony. [110

CHAR. Not he; the queen.

Enter CLEOPATRA.

CLEO. Saw you my lord?

ENO. No, lady.

CLEO. Was he not here?

CHAR. No, madam.

CLEO. He was disposed to mirth; but on the sudden
A Roman thought hath struck him.—Enobarbus. [120

ENO. Madam!

CLEO. Seek him, and bring him hither. Where's Alexas?

ALEX. Here, at your service. My lord approaches.

CLEO. We will not look upon him; go with us. [*All go out.*

ANTONY *enters with a* MESSENGER *and Attendants.*

MESS. Fulvia, thy wife, first came into the field. [131

ANT. Against my brother Lucius?

MESS. Ay:
But soon that war had end, and the time's state
Made friends of them, jointing their force 'gainst Cæsar,
Whose better issue in the war from Italy
Upon the first encounter drave them.

ANT. Well, what worst? [140

MESS. The nature of bad news infects the teller.

ANT. When it concerns the fool, or coward. On;

Things that are past are done, with me. 'Tis thus:
Who tells me true, though in his tale lay death,
I hear him as he flattered.
MESS. Labienus— [150
This is stiff news—hath, with his Parthian force,
Extended Asiä; from Eúphrates
His conquering banner shook from Syria
To Lydia and to Ionia, whilst— [*Pauses.*
ANT. Antony, thou wouldst say,—
MESS. O, my lord!
ANT. Speak to me home, mince not the general tongue; [159
Name Cleopatra as she is called in Rome;
Rail thou in Fulvia's phrase; and taunt my faults
With such full licence as both truth and malice
Have power to utter. O! then we bring forth weeds
When our quick minds lie still; and our ills told us [168
Is as our earing. Fare thee well awhile.
MESS. At your noble pleasure. [*Exit.*
ANT. From Sicyon, ho, the news! Speak there!
1 ATT., *calling.* The man from Sicyon! —Is there such an one?
2 ATT. He stays upon your will.
ANT. Let him appear.
<These strong Egyptian fetters I must break,
Or lose myself in dotage.> [179

Enter another MESSENGER.

What are you?
2 MESS. Fulvia thy wife is dead.
ANT. Where diëd she?
2 MESS. In Sicyon:
Her length of sickness, with what else more serious
Importeth thee to know, this bears.
[*Giving a letter.*
ANT. Forbear me.
[*Exit* SECOND MESSENGER. [190
<There's a great spirit gone! Thus did I desire it:
What our contempts do often hurl from us
We wish it ours again; the present pleasure,
By revolution low'ring, does become
The opposite of itself: she's good, being gone;
The hand could pluck her back that [200 shoved her on.
I must from this enchanting queen break off;
Ten thousand harms more than the ills I know
My idleness doth hatch. [*Calling.*] How now! Enobarbus!

Re-enter ENOBARBUS.

ENO. What's your pleasure, sir?
ANT. I must with haste from hence. [210
ENO. Why, then, we kill all our women. We see how mortal an unkindness is to them; if they suffer our departure, death's the word.
ANT. I must be gone.
ENO. Under a compelling occasion let women die; it were pity to cast them away for nothing; though between them and a great cause they should be esteemed nothing. Cleopatra, catching but the [220 least noise of this, dies instantly; I have seen her die twenty times upon far poorer moment. I do think there is mettle in death which commits some loving act upon her, she hath such a celerity in dying.
ANT. She is cunning past man's thought. [228
ENO. Alack, sir, no; her passions are made of nothing but the finest part of pure love. We cannot call her winds and waters sighs and tears; they are greater storms and tempests than almanacs can report: this cannot be cunning in her; if it be, she makes a shower of rain as well as Jove.
ANT. Would I had never seen her!
ENO. O, sir! you had then left unseen a wonderful piece of work, which not to have been blessed withal would have [240 discredited your travel.
ANT. Fulvia is dead.
ENO. Sir?
ANT. Fulvia is dead.

ENO. Fulvia!
ANT. Dead.
ENO. Why, sir, give the gods a thankful sacrifice. When it pleaseth their deities to take the wife of a man from him, it shows to man the tailors of the [250 earth; comforting therein, that when old robes are worn out, there are members to make new. If there were no more women but Fulvia, then had you indeed a cut, and the case to be lamented: this grief is crowned with consolation; your old smock brings forth a new petticoat; and indeed the tears live in an onion that should water this sorrow.
ANT. The business she hath broachëd in the state [261
Cannot endure my absence.
ENO. And the business you have broached here cannot be without you; especially that of Cleopatra's, which wholly depends on your abode.[3]
ANT. No more light answers. Let our officers
Have notice what we purpose. I shall break [269
The cause of our expedience to the queen,
And get her leave to part. For not alone
The death of Fulvia, with more urgent touches,
Do strongly speak to us, but the letters too
Of many our contriving friends in Rome
Petition us at home. Sextus Pompeius
Hath given the dare to Cæsar, and commands
The empire of the sea; our slippery [280 people—
Whose love is never linked to the deserver
Till his deserts are past—begin to throw
Pompey the Great and all his dignities
Upon his son; who, high in name and power,
Higher than both in blood and life, stands up [289
For the main soldier, whose quality, going on,
The sides o' th' world may danger. Much is breeding,
Which, like the courser's hair, hath yet but life,
And not a serpent's poison. Say, our pleasure,
To such whose place is under us, requires
Our quick remove from hence.
ENO. I shall do't. [*Exeunt.* [300

[3] continued presence.

SCENE III

In CLEOPATRA'S *private apartment, the* QUEEN *is accompanied by* IRAS, CHARMIAN, *and* ALEXAS. *She is worried because* ANTONY *is not with her.*

CLEO. Where is he?
CHAR. I did not see him since.
CLEO. See where he is, who's with him, what he does;
I did not send you;[4] if you find him sad,
Say I am dancing; if in mirth, report [10
That I am sudden sick: quick, and return.
[*Exit* ALEXAS.
CHAR. Madam, methinks, if you did love him dearly,
You do not hold the method to enforce
The like from him.
CLEO. What should I do I do not?
CHAR. In each thing give him way; cross him in nothing.
CLEO. Thou teachest, like a fool, the way to lose him. [21
CHAR. Tempt him not so too far; I wish, forbear:
In time we hate that which we often fear.
But here comes Antony.

Enter ANTONY.

CLEO. I am sick and sullen.
ANT. I am sorry to give breathing to my purpose— [30
CLEO. Help me away, dear Charmian, I shall fall:
It cannot be thus long; the sides of nature
Will not sustain it.
ANT. Now, my dearest queen,—
CLEO. Pray you, stand farther from me.
ANT. What's the matter?
CLEO. I know, by that same eye, there's some good news. [40

[4] He must not know I sent you.

What says the married woman? You may go:
Would she had never given you leave to come!
Let her not say 'tis I that keep you here;
I have no power upon you; hers you are.
ANT. The gods best know—
CLEO. O, never was there queen
So mightily betrayed! yet at the first [50
I saw the treasons planted.
ANT. Cleopatra,—
CLEO. Why should I think you can be mine and true—
Though you in swearing shake the thronëd gods—
Who have been false to Fulvia? Riotous madness,
To be entangled with those mouth-made vows, [60
Which break themselves in swearing!
ANT. Most sweet queen,—
CLEO. Nay, pray you, seek no color for your going,
But bid farewell, and go: when you sued staying,
Then was the time for words; no going then:
Eternity was in our lips and eyes, [69
Bliss in our brows bent; none our parts so poor
But was a race of heaven; they are so still,
Or thou, the greatest soldier of the world,
Art turned the greatest liar.
ANT. How now, lady!
CLEO. I would I had thy inches; thou shouldst know
There were a heart in Egypt.
ANT. Hear me, queen: [80
The strong necessity of time commands
Our services awhile, but my full heart
Remains in use with you. Our Italy
Shines o'er with civil swords; Sextus Pompeius
Makes his approaches to the port of Rome;
Equality of two domestic powers
Breeds scrupulous[5] faction. The hated, grown to strength, [90
Are newly grown to love; the condemned Pompey,
Rich in his father's honor, creeps apace
Into the hearts of such as have not thrived
Upon the present state, whose numbers threaten;
And quietness, grown sick of rest, would purge [99
By any desperate change. My more particular,
And that which most with you should safe my going,
Is Fulvia's death.
CLEO. Though age from folly could not give me freedom,
It does from childishness: can Fulvia die?
ANT. She's dead, my queen:
Look here, and at thy sovereign leisure read [111
The garboils[6] she awaked; at the last, best,
See when and where she died.
CLEO. O most false love!
Where be the sacred vials thou shouldst fill
With sorrowful water? Now I see, I see,
In Fulvia's death, how mine received shall be. [120
ANT. Quarrel no more, but be prepared to know
The purposes I bear, which are or cease,
As you shall give th' advice. By the fire
That quickens Nilus' slime, I go from hence
Thy soldier-servant, making peace or war
As thou affects.
CLEO. Cut my lace, Charmian, come;
But let it be: I am quickly ill—and well,
So[7] Antony loves. [131
ANT. My precious queen, forbear,
And give true evidence to his love, which stands
An honorable trial.
CLEO. So Fulvia told me.
I prithee, turn aside and weep for her;
Then bid adieu to me, and say the tears

[5] captious.

[6] disturbances.

[7] Qq. The passage is sometimes interpreted, "I am quickly ill and well. In such manner Antony loves," which may be correct.

Belong to Egypt: good now, play one scene [140
Of excellent dissembling, and let it look
Like perfect honor.
ANT. You'll heat my blood; no more.
CLEO. You can do better yet, but this is meetly.
ANT. Now, by my sword,—
CLEO. And target.—Still he mends;
But this is not the best. Look, prithee, Charmian, [149
How this Herculean Roman does become
The carriage of his chafe.[8]
ANT. I'll leave you, lady.
CLEO. Courteous lord, one word.
Sir, you and I must part, but that's not it:
Sir, you and I have loved, but there's not it;
That you know well: something it is I would—
O! my oblivion is a very Antony, [160
And I am all forgotten.
ANT. But that your royalty
Holds idleness your subject, I should take you
For idleness itself.
CLEO. 'Tis sweating labor
To bear such idleness so near the heart
As Cleopatra this. But, sir, forgive me,
Since my becomings kill me when they do not [170
Eye well to you. Your honor calls you hence;
Therefore be deaf to my unpitied folly;
And all the gods go with you! upon your sword
Sit laurel victory! and smooth success
Be strewed before your feet!
ANT. Let us go. Come;
Our separation so abides and flies, [179
That thou, residing here, go'st yet with me,
And I, hence fleeting, here remain with thee.
Away! [*Goes.*

SCENE IV

In a room in CÆSAR'S *house in Rome, he and his colleague,* LEPIDUS, *are discussing* ANTONY. *Attendants are in waiting.*

CÆS. You may see, Lepidus, and henceforth know,
It is not Cæsar's natural vice to hate
Our great competitor.[9] From Alexandria
This is the news: he fishes, drinks and wastes [10
The lamps of night in revel; is not more manlike
Than Cleopatra, nor the queen of Ptolemy
More womanly than he; hardly gave audience, or
Vouchsafed to think he had partners: you shall find there
A man who is the abstract of all faults
That all men follow. [20
LEP. I must not think there are
Evils enow to darken all his goodness;
His faults in him seem as the spots of heaven,
More fiery by night's blackness; hereditary,
Rather than purchased; what he cannot change,
Than what he chooses. [29
CÆS. You are too indulgent. Let us grant it is not
Amiss to tumble on the bed of Ptolemy,
To give a kingdom for a mirth, to sit
And keep the turn of tippling with a slave,
To reel the streets at noon, and stand the buffet
With knaves that smell of sweat; say this becomes him— [39
As his composure must be rare indeed
Whom these things cannot blemish—yet must Antony
No way excuse his soils, when we do bear
So great weight in his lightness. If he filled
His vacancy with his voluptuousness,
Full surfeits and the dryness of his bones
Call on him for't; but to confound such time
That drums him from his sport, and [50 speaks as loud
As his own state and ours, 'tis to be chid

[8] The bearing of his anger.

[9] colleague.

As we rate boys who, being mature in knowledge,
Pawn their experience to their present pleasure,
And so rebel to judgment.

Enter a MESSENGER.

LEP. Here's more news.
MESS. Thy biddings have been done, and every hour, [61
Most noble Cæsar, shalt thou have report
How 'tis abroad. Pompey is strong at sea,
And it appears he is beloved of those
That only have feared Cæsar; to the ports
The discontents repair, and men's reports
Give[10] him much wronged.
CÆS. I should have known no less. [70
It hath been taught us from the primal state,
That he which is was wished until he were;
And the ebbed man, ne'er loved till ne'er worth love,
Comes deared by being lacked. This common body,
Like to a vagabond flag upon the stream,
Goes to and back, lackeying the varying tide, [81
To rot itself with motion.
MESS. Cæsar, I bring thee word,
Menecrates and Menas, famous pirates,
Make the sea serve them, which they ear and wound
With keels of every kind: many hot inroads
They make in Italy; the borders maritime [90
Lack blood to think on't, and flush youth revolt;
No vessel can peep forth, but 'tis as soon
Taken as seen; for Pompey's name strikes more
Than could his war resisted.
CÆS. Antony,
Leave thy lascivious wassails. When thou once
Wast beaten from Modena, where thou slew'st [101
Hirtius and Pansa, consuls, at thy heel
Did famine follow, whom thou fought'st against,
Though daintily brought up, with patience more
Than savages could suffer; thou didst drink
The stale[11] of horses and the gilded puddle [110
Which beasts would cough at; thy palate then did deign
The roughest berry on the rudest hedge;
Yea, like the stag, when snow the pasture sheets,
The barks of trees thou browsëdst; on the Alps
It is reported thou didst eat strange flesh,
Which some did die to look on; and all this— [121
It wounds thine honor that I speak it now—
Was borne so like a soldier that thy cheek
So much as lanked not.
LEP. 'Tis pity of him.
CÆS. Let his shames quickly
Drive him to Rome. 'Tis time we twain
Did show ourselves i' th' field; and to that end [131
Assemble we[12] immediate council; Pompey
Thrives in our idleness.
LEP. To-morrow, Cæsar,
I shall be furnished to inform you rightly
Both what by sea and land I can be able
To front this present time.
CÆS. Till which encounter,
It is my business too. Farewell! [140
LEP. Farewell, my lord! What you shall know meantime
Of stirs abroad, I shall beseech you, sir,
To let me be partaker.
CÆS. Doubt not, sir;
I knew it for my bond.[13] [*Exit* LEPIDUS.

SCENE V

In her palace in Alexandria CLEOPATRA *cannot keep her thoughts from the absent* ANTONY *and sends messenger after mes-*

[10] report. [11] urine. [12] B, me. [13] duty.

senger to him with letters. CHARMIAN, IRAS, *and* MARDIAN *are with her.*

CLEO. Charmian!
CHAR. Madam!
CLEO. Ha, ha!
Give me to drink mandragora.
CHAR. Why, madam? [10
CLEO. That I might sleep out this great gap of time
My Antony is away.
CHAR. You think of him too much.
CLEO. O! 'tis treason.
CHAR. Madam, I trust, not so.
CLEO. Thou, eunuch Mardian!
MAR. What's your highness' pleasure?
CLEO. Not now to hear thee sing; I take no pleasure [20
In aught an eunuch has. 'Tis well for thee,
That, being unseminared, thy freer thoughts
May not fly forth of Egypt. Hast thou affections?
MAR. Yes, gracious madam.
CLEO. Indeed!
MAR. Not in deed, madam; for I can do nothing [30
But what in deed is honest to be done;
Yet have I fierce affectiöns, and think
What Venus did with Mars.
CLEO. O Charmian!
Where think'st thou he is now? Stands he, or sits he?
Or does he walk? or is he on his horse?
O happy horse, to bear the weight of Antony!
Do bravely, horse! for wot'st thou whom thou mov'st? [41
The demi-Atlas of this earth, the arm
And burgonet of men. He's speaking now,
Or murmuring, "Where's my serpent of old Nile?"
For so he calls me. Now I feed myself
With most delicious poison. Think on me,
That am with Phœbus' amorous pinches black, [51
And wrinkled deep in time. Broad-fronted Cæsar,
When thou wast here above the ground I was
A morsel for a monarch, and great Pompey
Would stand and make his eyes grow in my brow;
There would he anchor his aspéct and die
With looking on his life. [61

Enter ALEXAS.

ALEX. Sovereign of Egypt, hail!
CLEO. How much unlike art thou Mark Antony!
Yet, coming from him, that great med'cine hath
With his tinct gilded thee.
How goes it with my brave Mark Antony? [70
ALEX. Last thing he did, dear queen,
He kissed, the last of many doubled kisses,
This orient pearl. His speech sticks in my heart.
CLEO. Mine ear must pluck it thence.
ALEX. "Good friend," quoth he,
"Say, the firm Roman to great Egypt sends [79
This treasure of an oyster; at whose foot,
To mend the petty present, I will piece
Her opulent throne with kingdoms; all the east,
Say thou, shall call her mistress." So he nodded,
And soberly did mount an arm-gaunt[14] steed,
Who neighed so high that what I would have spoke
Was beastly dumbed by him. [90
CLEO. What! was he sad or merry?
ALEX. Like to the time o' th' year between the extremes
Of hot and cold; he was nor sad nor merry.
CLEO. O well-divided disposition! Note him,
Note him, good Charmian, 'tis the man; but note him:
He was not sad, for he would shine on those [101

[14] Obviously a misprint; but no satisfactory emendation has been suggested.

That make their looks by his; he was not merry,
Which seemed to tell them his remembrance lay
In Egypt with his joy; but between both:
O heavenly mingle!—Be'st thou sad or merry,
The violence of either thee becomes;
So does it no man else.—Mett'st thou my posts? [111
ALEX. Ay, madam, twenty several messengers.
Why do you send so thick?
CLEO. Who's born that day
When I forget to send to Antony
Shall die a beggar.—Ink and paper, Charmian.—
Welcome, my good Alexas.—Did I, Charmian, [120
Ever love Cæsar so?
CHAR. O, that brave Cæsar!
CLEO. Be choked with such another emphasis!
Say the brave Antony.
CHAR. The valiant Cæsar!
CLEO. By Isis, I will give thee bloody teeth,
If thou with Cæsar paragon again
My man of men. [130
CHAR. By your most gracious pardon,
I sing but after you.
CLEO. My salad days,
When I was green in judgment, cold in blood,
To say as I said then! But come, away;
Get me ink and paper:
He shall have every day a several greeting;
Or I'll unpeople Egypt. [*Exeunt.* [140

ACT TWO

SCENE I

The younger POMPEY *aspires to the dominion that had been his sire's. In his house in Messina, talking to* MENECRATES *and* MENAS, *he is, or pretends to be, confident that* ANTONY *will not take the field against him, and that the other Triumvirs will not act without him.*

POM. If the great gods be just, they shall assist
The deeds of justest men. [10
MENE. Know, worthy Pompey,
That what they do delay they not deny.
POM. Whiles we are suitors to their throne, decays
The thing we sue for.
MENE. We, ignorant of ourselves,
Beg often our own harms, which the wise powers
Deny us for our good; so find we profit
By losing of our prayers. [20
POM. I shall do well:
The people love me, and the sea is mine;
My powers are crescent, and my auguring hope
Says it will come to the full. Mark Antony
In Egypt sits at dinner, and will make
No wars without doors; Cæsar gets money where [29
He loses hearts; Lepidus flatters both,
Of both is flattered; but he neither loves,
Nor either cares for him.
MEN. Cæsar and Lepidus
Are in the field; a mighty strength they carry.
POM. Where have you this? 'tis false.
MEN. From Silvius, sir.
POM. He dreams; I know they are in Rome together, [39
Looking for Antony.—But all the charms of love,
Salt[1] Cleopatra, soften thy waned[2] lip!
Let witchcraft join with beauty, lust with both!
Tie up the libertine in a field of feasts,
Keep his brain fuming; Epicurean cooks
Sharpen with cloyless sauce his appetite,
That sleep and feeding may prorogue his honor
Even till a Lethe'd dulness! [50

Enter VARRIUS.

How now, Varrius!
VAR. This is most certain that I shall deliver:
Mark Antony is every hour in Rome
Expected; since he went from Egypt 'tis
A space for further travel.
POM. I could have given less matter

[1] Lascivious.
[2] B "wand", which may stand for "wanned."

A better ear.—Menas, I did not think
This amorous surfeiter would have donned his helm
For such a petty war; his soldiership
Is twice the other twain. But let us rear
The higher our opinion, that our stirring
Can from the lap of Egypt's widow pluck
The ne'er-lust-wearied Antony.
MEN. I cannot hope
Cæsar and Antony shall well greet together;
His wife that's dead did trespasses to Cæsar,
His brother warred upon him, although, I think,
Not moved by Antony.
POM. I know not, Menas,
How lesser enmities may give way to greater.
Were't not that we stand up against them all,
'Twere pregnant they should square[3] between themselves,
For they have entertainëd cause enough
To draw their swords; but how the fear of us
May cément their divisions and bind up
The petty difference, we yet not know.
Be it as our gods will have't! It only stands
Our lives upon, to use our strongest hands.
Come, Menas. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

The three triumvirs are to meet in the house of LEPIDUS, *in Rome.* LEPIDUS *is afraid of a quarrel between his two associates, and is urging* ENOBARBUS *to curb the fiery spirit of* ANTONY.

LEP. Good Enobarbus, 'tis a worthy deed,
And shall become you well, to entreat your captain
To soft and gentle speech.
ENO. I shall entreat him
To answer like himself: if Cæsar move him,
Let Antony look over Cæsar's head,
And speak as loud as Mars. By Jupiter,
Were I the wearer of Antonius' beard,
I would not shave't to-day.
LEP. 'Tis not a time
For private stomaching.[4]
ENO. Every time
Serves for the matter that is then born in't.
LEP. But small to greater matters must give way.
ENO. Not if the small come first.
LEP. Your speech is passion;
But, pray you, stir no embers up. Here comes
The noble Antony.

Enter ANTONY *and* VENTIDIUS.

ENO. And yonder, Cæsar.

Enter, from the other side, CÆSAR, MECÆNAS, *and* AGRIPPA.

ANT. <If we compose[5] well here, to Parthia.
Hark, Ventidius.> [*Whispers.*
CÆS., *continuing a conversation with* MECÆNAS. <I do not know,
Mecænas; ask Agrippa.>
LEP. Noble friends,
That which combined us was most great, and let not
A leaner action rend us. What's amiss,
May it be gently heard; when we debate
Our trivial difference loud, we do commit
Murder in healing wounds; then, noble partners—
The rather for I earnestly beseech—
Touch you the sourest points with sweetest terms,
Nor curstness grow to the matter.
ANT. 'Tis spoken well.
Were we before our armies, and to fight,
I should do thus.
CÆS. Welcome to Rome!
ANT. Thank you.
CÆS. Sit.
ANT. Sit, sir.
CÆS. Nay, then. [*Takes a seat. The others do likewise.*
ANT. I learn, you take things ill which are not so,

[3] quarrel.
[4] resentment.
[5] agree.

Or, being, concern you not.
CÆS. I must be laughed at
If, or for nothing or a little, I
Should say myself offended, and with you
Chiefly i' th' world; more laughed at that I should
Once name you derogately, when to sound your name [71
It not concerned me.
ANT. My being in Egypt, Cæsar, What was't to you?
CÆS. No more than my residing here at Rome
Might be to you in Egypt; yet, if you there
Did practise on my state, your being in Egypt [80
Might be my question.
ANT. How intend you, practised?
CÆS. You may be pleased to catch at mine intent
By what did here befall me. Your wife and brother
Made wars upon me, and their contestation
Was theme for you, you were the word of war. [90
ANT. You do mistake your business; my brother never
Did urge me in his act: [6] I did inquire it;
And have my learning from some true reports,
That drew their swords with you. Did he not rather
Discredit my authority with yours,
And make the wars alike against my stomach,[7] [100
Having alike your cause? Of this my letters
Before did satisfy you. If you'll patch [8] a quarrel,
As matter whole you have [not] to make it with,
It must not be with this.
CÆS. You praise yourself
By laying defects of judgment to me, but
You patched up your excuses. [110
ANT. Not so, not so;
I know you could not lack, I am certain on't,
Very necessity of this thought, that I,
Your partner in the cause 'gainst which he fought,
Could not with graceful eyes attend those wars
Which fronted mine own peace. As for my wife, [120
I would you had her spirit in such another:
The third o' th' world is yours, which with a snaffle
You may pace easy, but not such a wife.
ENO. Would we had all such wives, that the men might go
To wars with the women!
ANT. So much uncurbable, her garboils, Cæsar, [130
Made out of her impatience—which not wanted
Shrewdness of policy too—I, grieving, grant
Did you too much disquiet; for that, you must
But say I could not help it.
CÆS. I wrote to you
When rioting in Alexandria; you
Did pocket up my letters, and, with taunts, [141
Did gibe my missive [9] out of audience.
ANT. Sir,
He fell upon me ere admitted: then
Three kings I had newly feasted, and did want
Of what I was i' th' morning; but next day
I told him of myself, which was as much
As to have asked him pardon. Let this fellow [151
Be nothing of our strife; if we contend,
Out of our question wipe him.
CÆS. You have broken
The article of your oath, which you shall never
Have tongue to charge me with.
LEP. Soft, Cæsar!
ANT. No,
Lepidus, let him speak: [160
The honor's sacred which he talks on now,
Supposing that I lacked it.—But on, Cæsar;

[6] pretend to act on my authority.
[7] will. [8] make out of trifles.
[9] messenger.

The article of my oath.
CÆS. To lend me arms and aid when I required them,
The which you both denied.
ANT. Neglected, rather;
And then when poisoned hours had bound me up
From mine own knowledge. As nearly as I may,
I'll play the penitent to you; but mine honesty
Shall not make poor my greatness, nor my power
Work without it. Truth is, that Fulvia,
To have me out of Egypt, made wars here;
For which myself, the ignorant motive, do
So far ask pardon as befits mine honor
To stoop in such a case.
LEP. 'Tis nobly[10] spoken.
MEC. If it might please you, to enforce no further
The griefs between ye, to forget them quite
Were to remember that the present need
Speaks to atone you.
LEP. Worthily spoken, Mecænas.
ENO. Or, if you borrow one another's love for the instant, you may, when you hear no more words of Pompey, return it again: you shall have time to wrangle in, when you have nothing else to do.
ANT. Thou art a soldier only; speak no more.
ENO. That truth should be silent I had almost forgot.
ANT. You wrong this presence, therefore speak no more.
ENO. Go to, then; your considerate stone.
CÆS. I do not much dislike the matter, but
The manner of his speech; for't cannot be
We shall remain in friendship, our conditions
So diff'ring in their acts. Yet, if I knew
What hoop should hold us staunch, from edge to edge
O' th' world I would pursue it.
AGR. Give me leave, Cæsar.
CÆS. Speak, Agrippa.
AGR. Thou hast a sister by the mother's side,
Admired Octavia; great Mark Antony
Is now a widower.
CÆS. Say not so, Agrippa:
If Cleopatra heard you, your reproof
Were well deserved of rashness.
ANT. I am not married, Cæsar; let me hear
Agrippa further speak.
AGR. To hold you in perpetual amity,
To make you brothers, and to knit your hearts
With an unslipping knot, take Antony
Octavia to his wife; whose beauty claims
No worse a husband than the best of men,
Whose virtue and whose general graces speak
That which none else can utter. By this marriage,
All little jealousies which now seem great,
And all great fears which now import their dangers,
Would then be nothing; truths would be but tales
Where now half tales be truths; her love to both
Would each to other and all loves to both
Draw after her. Pardon what I have spoke,
For 'tis a studied, not a present thought,
By duty ruminated.
ANT. Will Cæsar speak?
CÆS. Not till he hears how Antony is touched
With what is spoke already.
ANT. What power is in Agrippa,
If I would say, "Agrippa, be it so,"
To make this good?
CÆS. The power of Cæsar, and
His power unto Octavia.
ANT. May I never
To this good purpose, that so fairly shows,
Dream of impediment!—Let me have thy hand;

[10] B, noble.

Further this act of grace, and from this hour
The heart of brothers govern in our loves
And sway our great designs!
CÆS. There is my hand.
A sister I bequeath you whom no brother
Did ever love so dearly; let her live [270
To join our kingdoms and our hearts, and never
Fly off our loves again!
LEP. Happily, amen!
ANT. I did not think to draw my sword 'gainst Pompey,
For he hath laid strange courtesies and great
Of late upon me; I must thank him only,
Lest my remembrance suffer ill report;
At heel of that, defy him. [281
LEP. Time calls upon's:
Of us must Pompey presently be sought,
Or else he seeks out us.
ANT. Where lies he?
CÆS. About the Mount Misenum.
ANT. What is his strength
By land?
CÆS. Great and increasing; but by sea [290
He is an absolute master.
ANT. So is the fame.[11]
Would we had spoke together! Haste we for it;
Yet, ere we put ourselves in arms, dispatch we
The business we have talked of.
CÆS. With most gladness,
And do invite you to my sister's view,
Whither straight I'll lead you. [300
ANT. Let us, Lepidus,
Not lack your company.
LEP. Noble Antony,
Not sickness should detain me. [*Flourish. Exeunt* CÆSAR, ANTONY, *and* LEPIDUS.
MEC. Welcome from Egypt, sir.
ENO. Half the heart of Cæsar, worthy Mecænas! My honorable friend, Agrippa! [310
AGR. Good Enobarbus!
MEC. We have cause to be glad that matters are so well disgested. You stayed well by't in Egypt.

[11] Such is the report.

ENO. Ay, sir; we did sleep day out of countenance, and made the night light with drinking.
MEC. Eight wild boars roasted whole at a breakfast, and but twelve persons there; is this true? [320
ENO. This was but as a fly by an eagle; we had much more monstrous matter of feast, which worthily deserved noting.
MEC. She's a most triumphant lady, if report be square to her.
ENO. When she first met Mark Antony she pursed up his heart, upon the river of Cydnus.
AGR. There she appeared indeed, or my reporter devised well for her. [330
ENO. I will tell you.
The barge she sat in, like a burnished throne,
Burned on the water; the poop was beaten gold,
Purple the sails, and so perfumëd, that
The winds were love-sick with them; the oars were silver,
Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke, and made [340
The water which they beat to follow faster,
As amorous of their strokes. For her own person,
It beggared all description; she did lie
In her pavilion—cloth-of-gold of tissue—
O'er-picturing that Venus where we see
The fancy outwork nature; on each side her
Stood pretty-dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids, [351
With divers-colored fans, whose wind did seem
To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,
And what they undid did.
AGR. O! rare for Antony.
ENO. Her gentlewomen, like the Nereides, [359
So many mermaids, tended her i' th' eyes,
And made their bends adornings; at the helm
A seeming mermaid steers; the silken tackle

Swell with the touches of those flower-soft hands,
That yarely frame the office. From the barge
A strange invisible perfume hits the sense [370
Of the adjacent wharfs. The city cast
Her people out upon her, and Antony,
Enthroned i' th' market-place, did sit alone,
Whistling to the air, which, but for vacancy,
Had gone to gaze on Cleopatra too
And made a gap in nature.

AGR. Rare Egyptian!

ENO. Upon her landing, Antony sent to her, [381
Invited her to supper; she replied
It should be better he became her guest,
Which she entreated. Our courteous Antony,
Whom ne'er the word of "No" woman heard speak,
Being barbered ten times o'er, goes to the feast,
And, for his ordinary,[12] pays his heart [390
For what his eyes eat only.

AGR. Royal wench!
She made great Cæsar lay his sword to bed;
He ploughed her, and she cropped.

ENO. I saw her once
Hop forty paces through the public street;
And, having lost her breath, she spoke, and panted [400
That she did make defect perfectiön,
And, breathless, power breathe forth.

MEC. Now Antony must leave her utterly.

ENO. Never; he will not:
Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale
Her infinite variety; other women cloy
The appetites they feed, but she makes hungry [409
Where most she satisfies; for vilest things
Become themselves in her, that the holy priests
Bless her when she is riggish.[13]

[12] food.
[13] wanton.

MEC. If beauty, wisdom, modesty, can settle
The heart of Antony, Octavia is
A blessed lottery to him.

AGR. Let us go.—
Good Enobarbus, make yourself my guest
Whilst you abide here. [420

ENO. Humbly, sir, I thank you.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

ANTONY *has accompanied* CÆSAR *to the latter's house, and arrangements have been completed for the marriage of* ANTONY *to* OCTAVIA. *They are on the point of saying good-night.*

ANT. The world and my great office will sometimes
Divide me from your bosom.

OCT. All which time
Before the gods my knee shall bow my prayers [11
To them for you.

ANT. Good-night, sir.—My Octavia,
Read not my blemishes in the world's report;
I have not kept my square, but that to come
Shall all be done by th' rule. Good night, dear lady.

OCT. Good night, sir. [20

CÆS. Good night. [CÆSAR *and* OCTAVIA *go out, followed by the Attendants, who have been waiting on them, leaving* ANTONY *alone.*

Enter SOOTHSAYER.

ANT. Now, sirrah; you do wish yourself in Egypt?

SOOTH. Would I had never come from thence, nor you
Neither.[14] [30

ANT. If you can, your reason?

SOOTH. I see it in
My motion, have it not in my tongue: but yet
Hie you to Egypt again.

ANT. Say to me,
Whose fortunes shall rise higher, Cæsar's or mine?

SOOTH. Cæsar's.

[14] B, Thither.

Therefore, O Antony! stay not by his side;
Thy demon—that's thy spirit which keeps thee—is
Noble, courageous, high, unmatchable,
Where Cæsar's is not; but near him thy angel
Becomes a fear, as being o'erpowered; therefore
Make space enough between you.
ANT. Speak this no more.
SOOTH. To none but thee; no more but when to thee.
If thou dost play with him at any game
Thou art sure to lose, and, of that natural luck,
He beats thee 'gainst the odds; thy lustre thickens
When he shines by. I say again, thy spirit
Is all afraid to govern thee near him,
But, he away, 'tis noble.
ANT. Get thee gone:
Say to Ventidius I would speak with him.
[*Exit* SOOTHSAYER.
He shall to Parthia.—Be it art or hap,
He hath spoken true; the very dice obey him.
And in our sports my better cunning faints
Under his chance; if we draw lots he speeds,
His cocks do win the battle still of mine
When it is all to nought, and his quails ever
Beat mine, inhooped, at odds. I will to Egypt;
And, though I make this marriage for my peace,
I' th' east my pleasure lies.

Enter VENTIDIUS.

O! come, Ventidius,
You must to Parthia; your commission's ready;
Follow me, and receive't. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV

MECÆNAS *and* AGRIPPA *are about to proceed to the front. They are with* LEPIDUS *in a street in Rome.*

LEP. Trouble yourselves no further; pray you, hasten
Your generals after.
AGR. Sir, Mark Antony
Will e'en but kiss Octavia, and we'll follow.
LEP. Till I shall see you in your soldier's dress,
Which will become you both, farewell!
MEC. We shall,
As I conceive the journey, be at th' Mount
Before you, Lepidus.
LEP. Your way is shorter;
My purposes do draw me much about:
You'll win two days upon me.
MEC. AND AGR. Sir, good success!
LEP. Farewell! [*Goes off one way, while the others depart in the contrary direction.*

SCENE V

CLEOPATRA, *in her palace in Alexandria, cannot amuse herself in* ANTONY'S *absence. She has with her* CHARMIAN, IRAS, ALEXAS, *and an Attendant.*

CLEO. Give me some music—music, moody food
Of us that trade in love.
ATTEND., *calling.* The music, ho!

Enter MARDIAN.

CLEO. Let it alone; let's to billiards: come, Charmian.
CHAR. My arm is sore; best play with Mardian.
CLEO. As well a woman with an eunuch played
As with a woman.—Come, you'll play with me, sir?
MAR. As well as I can, madam.
CLEO. And when good will is showed, though't come too short,
The actor may plead pardon. I'll none now.—
Give me mine angle; we'll to th' river: there—
My music playing far off—I will betray
Tawny-finned fishes; my bended hook shall pierce

Their slimy jaws; and, as I draw them up,
I'll think them every one an Antony,
And say, "Ah, ha! y'are caught."
CHAR. 'Twas merry when
You wagered on your angling; when your diver
Did hang a salt-fish on his hook, which he
With fervency drew up.
CLEO. That time—O times!—
I laughed him out of patience; and that night
I laughed him into patience; and, next morn,
Ere the ninth hour, I drunk him to his bed;
Then put my tires and mantles on him, whilst
I wore his sword Philippan.

Enter a MESSENGER.

O! from Italy;
Ram thou thy fruitful tidings in mine ears,
That long time have been barren.
MESS. Madam, madam,—
CLEO., *unable to contain herself, as he hesitates.* Antony's dead!—If thou say so, villain,
Thou kill'st thy mistress; but, well and free,
If thou so yield him, there is gold, and here
My bluest veins to kiss—a hand that kings
Have lipped, and trembled kissing.
MESS. First, madam, he is well.
CLEO. Why, there's more gold;
But, sirrah, mark, we use
To say the dead are well: bring it to that,
The gold I give thee will I melt, and pour
Down thy ill-uttering throat.
MESS. Good madam, hear me.
CLEO. Well, go to, I will;
But there's no goodness in thy face; if Antony
Be free and healthful, [why] so tart a favor
To trumpet such good tidings? if not well,
Thou shouldst come like a Fury crowned with snakes,
Not like a formal man.
MESS. Will't please you hear me?
CLEO. I have a mind to strike thee ere thou speak'st;
Yet, if thou say Antony lives, is well,
Or friends with Cæsar, or not captive to him,
I'll set thee in a shower of gold, and hail
Rich pearls upon thee.
MESS. Madam, he's well.
CLEO. Well said.
MESS. And friends with Cæsar.
CLEO. Th' art an honest man.
MESS. Cæsar and he are greater friends than ever.
CLEO. Make thee a fortune from me.
MESS. But yet, madam,—
CLEO. I do not like "but yet;" it does allay
The good precédence; fie upon "but yet"!
"But yet" is as a gaoler to bring forth
Some monstrous malefactor. Prithee, friend,
Pour out the pack of matter to mine ear,
The good and bad together. He's friends with Cæsar;
In state of health, thou sayst; and, thou sayst, free.
MESS. Free, madam! no; I made no such report:
He's bound—unto Octavia.
CLEO. For what good turn?
MESS. For the best turn—i' th' bed.
CLEO. I am pale, Charmian!
MESS. Madam, he's married to Octavia.
CLEO. The most infectious pestilence upon thee! [*Strikes him down.*
MESS. Good madam, patience.
CLEO. What say you? [*Strikes him again.*] Hence,
Horrible villain! or I'll spurn thine eyes,
Like balls, before me; I'll unhair thy head; [*She hales him up and down.*
Thou shalt be whipped with wire, and stewed in brine,

Smarting in lingering pickle.
MESS. Gracious madam,
I, that do bring the news, made not the match.
CLEO. Say 'tis not so, a province I will give thee,
And make thy fortunes proud; the blow thou hadst
Shall make thy peace for moving me to rage,
And I will boot thee with what gift beside
Thy modesty can beg.
MESS. He's married, madam.
CLEO. Rogue! thou hast lived too long. [*Draws a knife.*
MESS. <Nay, then I'll run.>
What mean you, madam? I have made no fault. [*Exit.*
CHAR. Good madam, keep yourself within yourself;
The man is innocent.
CLEO. Some innocents scape not the thunderbolt.—
Melt Egypt into Nile! and kindly creatures
Turn all to serpents!—Call the slave again:
Though I am mad, I will not bite him. Call.
CHAR. He is afeard to come.
CLEO. I will not hurt him. [*Exit* CHARMIAN.
These hands do lack nobility, that they strike
A meaner than myself, since I myself
Have given myself the cause.

Re-enter CHARMIAN, *and* MESSENGER.

Come hither, sir.
Though it be honest, it is never good
To bring bad news; give to a gracious message
A host of tongues, but let ill tidings tell
Themselves when they be felt.
MESS. I have done my duty.
CLEO. Is he married?
I cannot hate thee worser than I do
If thou again say "Yes."
MESS. He's married, madam.
CLEO. The gods confound thee! dost thou hold there still?
MESS. Should I lie, madam?
CLEO. O! I would thou didst,
So half my Egypt were submerged and made
A cistern for scaled snakes. Go, get thee hence;
Hadst thou Narcissus in thy face, to me
Thou wouldst appear most ugly. He is married?
MESS. I crave your highness' pardon.
CLEO. He is married?
MESS. Take no offence that I would not offend you;
To punish me for what you make me do
Seems much unequal! he's married to Octavia.
CLEO. O! that his fault should make a knave of thee,
That art not what th' art sure of. Get thee hence;
The merchandise which thou hast brought from Rome
Are all too dear for me; lie they upon thy hand,
And be undone by 'em! [*Exit* MESSENGER.
CHAR. Good your highness, patience.
CLEO. In praising Antony I have dispraised Cæsar.
CHAR. Many times, madam.
CLEO. I am paid for't now.
Lead me from hence;
I faint. O Iras! Charmian!—'Tis no matter.—
Go to the fellow, good Alexas; bid him
Report the feature of Octavia, her years,
Her inclination, let him not leave out
The color of her hair: bring me word quickly. [*Exit* ALEXAS.
Let him for ever go—let him not—Charmian!—
Though he be painted one way like a Gorgon,
The other way's a Mars. [*To* MARDIAN.] Bid you Alexas
Bring me word how tall she is. [*Exit* MARDIAN.] Pity me, Charmian,
But do not speak to me. Lead me to my chamber. [*She goes out, supported*

by IRAS *and* CHARMIAN *and followed by the Attendant.*

SCENE VI

The forces of POMPEY *and those of the Triumvirate are facing one another near Misenum. Negotiations have been proceeding between the two parties, and* POMPEY *and* MENAS *meet the Triumvirs, and* ENOBARBUS *and* MECÆNAS, *between the two armies.*

POM. Your hostages I have, so have you mine;
And we shall talk before we fight. [10
CÆS. Most meet
That first we come to words, and therefore have we
Our written purposes before us sent;
Which if thou hast considered, let us know
If 'twill tie up thy discontented sword,
And carry back to Sicily much tall[15] youth
That else must perish here. [20
POM. To you all three,
The senators alone of this great world,
Chief factors for the gods, I do not know
Wherefore my father should revengers want,
Having a son and friends; since Julius Cæsar,
Who at Philippi the good Brutus ghosted,
There saw you laboring for him. What was't [30
That moved pale Cassius to conspire? and what
Made the all-honored, honest Roman, Brutus,
With the armed rest, courtiers of beauteous freedom,
To drench the Capitol, but that they would
Have one man but a man? And that is it [40
Hath made me rig my navy, at whose burden
The angered ocean foams, with which I meant
To scourge th' ingratitude that despiteful Rome
Cast on my noble father.
CÆS. Take your time.
ANT. Thou canst not fear us, Pompey, with thy sails; [50
We'll speak with thee at sea: at land, thou know'st
How much we do o'er-count thee.
POM. At land, indeed,
Thou dost o'er-count me of my father's house;
But, since the cuckoo builds not for himself,
Remain in't as thou mayst. [59
LEP. Be pleased to tell us—
For this is from the present[16]—how you take
The offers we have sent you.
CÆS. There's the point.
ANT. Which do not be entreated to, but weigh
What it is worth embraced.
CÆS. And what may follow,
To try a larger fortune.
POM. You have made me offer [70
Of Sicily, Sardinia; and I must
Rid all the sea of pirates; then, to send
Measures of wheat to Rome; this greed upon,
To part with unhacked edges, and bear back
Our targes undinted.
CÆS., ANT., AND LEP. That's our offer.
POM. Know, then, [79
I came before you here a man prepared
To take this offer; but Mark Antony
Put me to some impatience.—Though I lose
The praise of it by telling, you must know,
When Cæsar and your brother were at blows,
Your mother came to Sicily and did find
Her welcome friendly.
ANT. I have heard it, Pompey,—[90
And am well studied for a liberal thanks
Which I do owe you.
POM. Let me have your hand:
I did not think, sir, to have met you here.

[15] sturdy.

[16] irrelevant.

ANT. The beds i' th' east are soft; and thanks to you,
That called me timelier than my purpose hither,
For I have gained by't.
CÆS. Since I saw you last,
There is a change upon you.
POM. Well, I know not
What counts harsh Fortune casts upon my face,
But in my bosom shall she never come
To make my heart her vassal.
LEP. Well met here!
POM. I hope so, Lepidus.—Thus we are agreed.
I crave our composition may be written
And sealed between us.
CÆS. That's the next to do.
POM. We'll feast each other ere we part; and let's
Draw lots who shall begin.
ANT. That will I, Pompey.
POM. No, Antony, take the lot:
But, first or last, your fine Egyptian cookery
Shall have the fame. I have heard that Julius Cæsar
Grew fat with feasting there.
ANT. You have heard much.
POM. I have fair meanings, sir.
ANT. And fair words to them.
POM. Then, so much have I heard;
And I have heard Apollodorus carried—
ENO. No more of that: he did so.
POM. What, I pray you?
ENO. A certain queen to Cæsar in a mattress.
POM. I know thee now; how far'st thou, soldier?
ENO. Well;
And well am like to do; for I perceive
Four feasts are toward.
POM. Let me shake thy hand;
I never hated thee. I have seen thee fight,
When I have envied thy behavior.
ENO. Sir,
I never loved you much, but I ha' praised ye,
When you have well deserved ten times as much
As I have said you did.
POM. Enjoy thy plainness,
It nothing ill becomes thee.—
Aboard my galley I invite you all:
Will you lead, lords?
CÆS., ANT., AND LEP. Show us the way, sir.
POM. Come.
[*Exeunt all except* MENAS *and* ENOBARBUS.

MEN., *sadly*. Thy father, Pompey, would ne'er have made this treaty.—You and I have known, sir.
ENO. At sea, I think.
MEN. We have, sir.
ENO. You have done well by water.
MEN. And you by land.
ENO. I will praise any man that will praise me; though it cannot be denied what I have done by land.
MEN. Nor what I have done by water.
ENO. Yes, something you can deny for your own safety; you have been a great thief by sea.
MEN. And you by land.
ENO. There I deny my land service. But give me your hand, Menas; if our eyes had authority, here they might take two thieves kissing.
MEN. All men's faces are true, whatsoe'er their hands are.
ENO. But there is never a fair woman has a true face.
MEN. No slander; they steal hearts.
ENO. We came hither to fight with you.
MEN. For my part, I am sorry it is turned to a drinking. Pompey doth this day laugh away his fortune.
ENO. If he do, sure, he cannot weep it back again.
MEN. You have said, sir. We looked not for Mark Antony here: pray you, is he married to Cleopatra?
ENO. Cæsar's sister is called Octavia.
MEN. True, sir; she was the wife of Caius Marcellus.
ENO. But she is now the wife of Marcus Antonius.
MEN. Pray ye, sir?
ENO. 'Tis true.

MEN. Then is Cæsar and he for ever knit together.

ENO. If I were bound to divine of this unity, I would not prophesy so. [200

MEN. I think the policy of that purpose made more in the marriage than the love of the parties.

ENO. I think so too; but you shall find the band that seems to tie their friendship together will be the very strangler of their amity. Octavia is of a holy, cold, and still conversation.[17]

MEN. Who would not have his wife so? [210

ENO. Not he that himself is not so; which is Mark Antony. He will to his Egyptian dish again; then shall the sighs of Octavia blow the fire up in Cæsar, and, as I said before, that which is the strength of their amity shall prove the immediate author of their variance. Antony will use his affection where it is; he married but his occasion[18] here. [219

MEN. And thus it may be. Come, sir, will you aboard? I have a health for you.

ENO. I shall take it, sir: we have used our throats in Egypt.

MEN. Come; let's away. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII

On POMPEY'S *galley off Misenum, two or three* SERVANTS *are laying out the dessert which is to follow the banquet given to their master's great guests. Music is playing.*

1 SERV. Here they'll be, man. Some o' their plants are ill-rooted already; the least wind i' th' world will blow them down.

2 SERV. Lepidus is high-colored. [10

1 SERV. They have made him drink alms-drink.

2 SERV. As they pinch one another by the disposition,[19] he cries out, "No more;" reconciles them to his entreaty, and himself to the drink.

1 SERV. But it raises the greater war between him and his discretion.

2 SERV. Why, this it is to have a name in great men's fellowship; I had as lief [20 have a reed that will do me no service as a partisan I could not heave.

1 SERV. To be called into a huge sphere, and not to be seen to move in't, are the holes where eyes should be, which pitifully disaster the cheeks.

A sennet is sounded. Enter CÆSAR, ANTONY, LEPIDUS, POMPEY, AGRIPPA, MECÆNAS, ENOBARBUS, MENAS, *with other Captains.* ANTONY *is holding forth* [30 *about the wonders of Egypt.* LEPIDUS *is very drunk.*

ANT. Thus do they, sir. They take the flow o' th' Nile
By certain scales i' th' pyramid; they know,
By th' height, the lowness, or the mean, if dearth
Or foison[20] follow. The higher Nilus swells [40
The more it promises; as it ebbs, the seedsman
Upon the slime and ooze scatters his grain,
And shortly comes to harvest.

LEP. Y'ave strange serpents there.

ANT. Ay, Lepidus.

LEP. Your serpent of Egypt is bred now of your mud by the operation of your sun; so is your crocodile. [50

ANT. They are so.

POM. Sit—and some wine!—A health to Lepidus!

LEP. I am not so well as I should be, but I'll ne'er out.

ENO. Not till you have slept; I fear me you'll be in till then.

LEP. Nay, certainly, I have heard the Ptolemies' pyramises are very goodly things; without contradiction, I have heard that. [61

MEN. <Pompey, a word.

POM. Say in mine ear; what is't?

MEN. Forsake thy seat, I do beseech thee, captain,
And hear me speak a word.

POM. Forbear me till anon.>

[17] behavior.
[18] interest.
[19] banter one another.
[20] plenty.

This wine for Lepidus!

LEP. What manner o' thing is your crocodile? [70

ANT. It is shaped, sir, like itself, and it is as broad as it hath breadth; it is just so high as it is, and moves with it[21] own organs; it lives by that which nourisheth it; and, the elements once out of it, it transmigrates.

LEP. What color is it of?

ANT. Of it[21] own color too.

LEP. 'Tis a strange serpent.

ANT. 'Tis so; and the tears of it are wet. [81

CÆS. <Will this description satisfy him?

ANT. With the health that Pompey gives him, else he is a very epicure.>

POM. <Go hang, sir, hang! Tell me of that? away!
Do as I bid you.> Where's this cup I called for?

MEN. <If, for the sake of merit, thou wilt hear me, [91
Rise from thy stool.

POM. I think th'art mad. [*Walks aside with* MENAS.] The matter?

MEN. I have ever held my cap off to thy fortunes.

POM. Thou hast served me with much faith. What's else to say?>
Be jolly, lords. [100

ANT. These quick-sands, Lepidus,
Keep off them, for you sink.

MEN. <Wilt thou be lord of all the world?

POM. What sayst thou?

MEN. Wilt thou be lord of the whole world? That's twice.

POM. How should that be?

MEN. But entertain it,
And though thou think me poor, I am the man [111
Will give thee all the world.

POM. Hast thou drunk well?

MEN. No, Pompey, I have kept me from the cup.
Thou art, if thou dar'st be, the earthly Jove:
Whate'er the ocean pales or sky inclips
Is thine, if thou wilt ha't.

POM. Show me which way. [120

MEN. These three world-sharers, these competitors,
Are in thy vessel: let me cut the cable;
And, when we are put off, fall to their throats:
All there is thine.

POM. Ah! this thou shouldst have done,
And not have spoke on't. In me 'tis villany; [130
In thee 't had been good service. Thou must know,
'Tis not my profit that does lead mine honor;
Mine honor it. Repent that e'er thy tongue
Hath so betrayed thine act; being done unknown,
I should have found it afterwards well done, [140
But must condemn it now. Desist, and drink.> [*Returns to his seat.*

MEN. <For this,
I'll never follow thy palled fortunes more:
Who seeks, and will not take when once 'tis offered,
Shall never find it more.>

POM. This health to Lepidus!

ANT. Bear him ashore. I'll pledge it for him, Pompey. [151

ENO. Here's to thee, Menas!

MEN. Enobarbus, welcome!

POM. Fill till the cup be hid.

ENO., *pointing to the Attendant, who carries off* LEPIDUS. There's a strong fellow, Menas.

MEN. Why?

ENO. 'A bears the third part of the world, man; see'st not? [160

MEN. The third part, then, is drunk; would it were all,
That it might go on wheels!

ENO. Drink thou; increase the reels.

MEN. Come.

POM. This is not yet an Alexandrian feast.

ANT. It ripens towards it.—Strike the vessels, ho!—

[21] its.

Here is to Cæsar! [170
CÆS. I could well forbear't.
It's monstrous labor, when I wash my brain
And it grows fouler.
ANT. Be a child o' th' time.
CÆS. Possess it, I'll make answer;
But I had rather fast from all four days
Than drink so much in one.
ENO., *to* ANTONY. Ha! my brave emperor; [180
Shall we dance now the Egyptian Bacchanals,
And celebrate our drink?
POM. Let's ha't, good soldier.
ANT. Come, let's all take hands,
Till that the conquering wine hath steeped our sense
In soft and delicate Lethe.
ENO. All take hands.
Make battery to our ears with the loud music; [191
The while I'll place you; then the boy shall sing,
The holding every man shall bear as loud
As his strong sides can volley. [*Music plays.* ENOBARBUS *places them hand in hand.*

SONG.

Come, thou monarch of the vine,
Plumpy Bacchus, with pink eyne!
In thy fats our cares be drowned, [200
With thy grapes our hairs be crowned:
Cup us, till the world go round,
Cup us, till the world go round!

CÆS. What would you more?—Pompey, good night.—Good brother,
Let me request you off; our graver business
Frowns at this levity.—Gentle lords, let's part;
You see we have burnt our cheeks; [210 strong Enobarb
Is weaker than the wine, and mine own tongue
Splits what it speaks; the wild disguise hath almost
Antic'd us all. What needs more words? Good night.—
Good Antony, your hand.
POM. I'll try you on the shore.
ANT. And shall, sir. Give's your hand.
POM. O, Antony, [221
You have my father's house!—But what? we are friends.
Come down into the boat.
ENO. Take heed you fall not.
[*Exeunt* POMPEY, CÆSAR, ANTONY, *and Attendants.*
Menas, I'll not on shore.
MEN. No, to my cabin.—
These drums, these trumpets, flutes! what! [231
Let Neptune hear we bid a loud farewell
To these great fellows.—Sound, and be hanged! sound out! [*A flourish of trumpets with drums.*
ENO. Hoo! says 'a. There's my cap.
MEN. Hoo, noble captain! come.
[*Exeunt.*

ACT THREE

SCENE I

VENTIDIUS, *in Syria, has gained a great victory over the Parthians,* PACORUS, *the son of the Parthian monarch, being slain in the encounter. He is on the field of battle with* SILIUS *and other Roman officers and soldiers, and with the dead body of* PACORUS *borne before him.*

VEN. Now, darting Parthia, art thou struck; and now [9
Pleased fortune does of Marcus Crassus' death
Make me revenger.—Bear the king's son's body
Before our army.—Thy Pacorus, Orodes,
Pays this for Marcus Crassus.
SIL. Noble Ventidius,
Whilst yet with Parthian blood thy sword is warm,
The fugitive Parthians follow; spur through Media, [20
Mesopotamia, and the shelters whither
The routed fly; so thy grand captain Antony
Shall set thee on triumphant chariots and
Put garlands on thy head.
VEN. O Silius, Silius!
I have done enough; a lower place, note well,

May make too great an act; for, learn this, Silius, [30
Better to leave undone than by our deed
Acquire too high a fame when him we serve's away.
Cæsar and Antony have ever won
More in their officer than person; Sossius,
One of my place in Syria, his lieutenant,
For quick accumulation of renown,
Which he achieved by th' minute, lost his favor.
Who does i' th' wars more than his captain can [41
Becomes his captain's captain; and ambition,
The soldier's virtue, rather makes choice of loss
Than gain which darkens him.
I could do more to do Antonius good,
But 'twould offend him; and in his offence
Should my performance perish. [50
SIL. Thou hast, Ventidius, that [1]
Without the which a soldier, and his sword,
Grants scarce distinction. Thou wilt write to Antony?
VEN. I'll humbly signify what in his name,
That magical word of war, we have effected;
How, with his banners and his well-paid ranks, [61
The ne'er-yet-beaten horse of Parthia
We have jaded [2] out o' th' field.
SIL. Where is he now?
VEN. He purposeth to Athens; whither, with what haste
The weight we must convey with's will permit,
We shall appear before him.—On, there; pass along. [*Exeunt.* [70

SCENE II

AGRIPPA *and* ENOBARBUS *have met in a hall in* CÆSAR'S *house in Rome.* ANTONY *and* OCTAVIA *are about to depart for Athens.*

AGR. What! are the brothers parted?

ENO. They have dispatched with Pompey; he is gone;
The other three are sealing. Octavia weeps
To part from Rome; Cæsar is sad; and Lepidus, [11
Since Pompey's feast, as Menas says, is troubled
With the green sickness.
AGR. 'Tis a noble Lepidus.
ENO. A very fine one. O, how he loves Cæsar.
AGR. Nay, but how dearly he adores Mark Antony!
ENO. Cæsar? Why, he's the Jupiter of men. [21
AGR. What's Antony? The god of Jupiter.
ENO. Spake you of Cæsar? Hoo! [3] the nonpareil!
AGR. O, Antony! O thou Arabian bird!
ENO. Would you praise Cæsar, say, "Cæsar," go no further. [29
AGR. Indeed, he plied them both with excellent praises.
ENO. But he loves Cæsar best; yet he loves Antony.
Hoo! hearts, tongues, figures, scribes, bards, poets, cannot
Think, speak, cast, write, sing, number; hoo!
His love to Antony. But, as for Cæsar,
Kneel down, kneel down, and wonder.
AGR. Both he loves. [40
ENO. They are his shards, and he their beetle. [*Trumpets within.*] So;
This is to horse. Adieu, noble Agrippa.
AGR. Good fortune, worthy soldier, and farewell.

But, though he has said good-bye, ENOBARBUS *does not go, because at this moment* CÆSAR, ANTONY, OCTAVIA, *and* LEPIDUS *enter, and he waits, to observe and listen.* [50

ANT. No further, sir.
CÆS. You take from me a great part of myself;

[1] meaning wisdom.
[2] Driven like jades.
[3] F1, how.

Use me well in't.—Sister, prove such a wife
As my thoughts make thee, and as my farthest band
Shall pass on thy approof.—Most noble Antony,
Let not the piece of virtue, which is set
Betwixt us as the cément of our love
To keep it builded, be the ram to batter
The fortress of it; for better might we
Have loved without this mean, if on both parts
This be not cherished.

ANT. Make me not offended
In your distrust.

CÆS. I have said.

ANT. You shall not find,
Though you be therein curious, the least cause
For what you seem to fear. So, the gods keep you,
And make the hearts of Romans serve your ends!
We will here part.

CÆS. Farewell, my dearest sister, fare thee well:
The elements be kind to thee, and make
Thy spirits all of comfort! fare thee well.

OCT. My noble brother!

ANT. The April's in her eyes; it is love's spring,
And these the showers to bring it on. Be cheerful.

OCT. Sir, look well to my husband's house; and—

CÆS. What,
Octavia?

OCT. I'll tell you in your ear.

ANT. Her tongue will not obey her heart, nor can
Her heart inform her tongue; the swan's down feather,
That stands upon the swell at full of tide,
And neither way inclines.

ENO., *to* AGRIPPA. <Will Cæsar weep?

AGR. He has a cloud in's face.

ENO. He were the worse for that were he a horse;
So is he, being a man.

AGR. Why, Enobarbus,
When Antony found Julius Cæsar dead
He cried almost to roaring; and he wept
When at Philippi he found Brutus slain.

ENO. That year, indeed, he was troubled with a rheum;
What willingly he did confound he wailed,
Believe't, till I wept too.>

CÆS. <No, sweet Octavia,
You shall hear from me still; the time shall not
Outgo my thinking on you.>

ANT. Come, sir, come;
I'll wrastle with you in my strength of love:
Look, here I have you; thus I let you go,
And give you to the gods.

CÆS. Adieu; be happy!

LEP. Let all the number of the stars give light
To thy fair way!

CÆS. Farewell, farewell! [*Kisses* OCTAVIA.

ANT. Farewell!

[*Trumpets sound. Exeunt.*

SCENE III

CLEOPATRA, *still in her palace in Alexandria, and attended by* CHARMIAN, IRAS, *and* ALEXAS, *has determined to see again the* MESSENGER *who brought her the news of* ANTONY'S *marriage. We must suppose that the scene follows close upon II 5, though so very much has happened elsewhere in the meantime.*

CLEO. Where is the fellow?

ALEX. Half afeard to come.

CLEO. Go to, go to.

Enter a MESSENGER.

Come hither, sir.

ALEX. Good majesty,
Herod of Jewry dare not look upon you
But when you are well pleased.

CLEO. That Herod's head
I'll have; but how, when Antony is gone,
Through whom I might command it?—Come thou near.

MESS. Most gracious majesty!

CLEO. Didst thou behold
Octavia?

MESS. Ay, dread queen.
CLEO. Where?
MESS. Madam, in Rome;
I looked her in the face, and saw her led
Between her brother and Mark Antony.
CLEO. Is she as tall as me?
MESS. She is not, madam. [30
CLEO. Didst hear her speak? is she shrill-tongued, or low?
MESS. Madam, I heard her speak; she is low-voiced.
CLEO. That's not so good. He cannot like her long.
CHAR. Like her! O Isis! 'tis impossible.
CLEO. I think so, Charmian: dull of tongue, and dwarfish!— [40
What majesty is in her gait? Remember,
If e'er thou lookedst on majesty.
MESS. She creeps;
Her motion and her station [4] are as one;
She shows a body rather than a life,
A statue than a breather.
CLEO. Is this certain?
MESS. Or I have no observance.
CHAR. Three in Egypt
Cannot make better note. [50
CLEO. He's very knowing,
I do perceive't. There's nothing in her yet.
The fellow has good judgment.
CHAR. Excellent.
CLEO. Guess at her years, I prithee.
MESS. Madam,
She was a widow—
CLEO. Widow!—Charmian, hark.
MESS. And I do think she's thirty. [60
CLEO. Bear'st thou her face in mind? is't long or round?
MESS. Round, even to faultiness.
CLEO. For the most part, too, they are foolish that are so.—
Her hair, what color?
MESS. Brown, madam; and her forehead
As low as she would wish it.
CLEO. There's gold for thee: [70
Thou must not take my former sharpness ill.
I will employ thee back again; I find thee
Most fit for business. Go, make thee ready;
Our letters are prepared. [*Exit* MESSENGER.
CHAR. A proper man.
CLEO. Indeed, he is so; I repent me much [81
That so I harried him. Why, methinks, by him,
This creature's no such [5] thing.
CHAR. Nothing, madam.
CLEO. The man hath seen some majesty, and should know.
CHAR. Hath he seen majesty! Isis else defend,[6]
And serving you so long! [90
CLEO. I have one thing more to ask him yet, good Charmian:
But 'tis no matter; thou shalt bring him to me
Where I will write. All may be well enough.
CHAR. I warrant you, madam. [*Exeunt.*

[4] standing still.

SCENE IV

ANTONY *and* OCTAVIA *are now in Athens. Already* ANTONY *is taking exception to the conduct of* CÆSAR.

ANT. Nay, nay, Octavia, not only that;
That were excusable, that, and thousands more
Of semblable impórt; but he hath waged
New wars 'gainst Pompey; made his will, and read it [10
To public ear;
Spoke scantly of me; when perforce he could not
But pay me terms of honor, cold and sickly
He vented them; most narrow measure lent me;
When the best hint was given him, he not took't,
Or did it from his teeth. [20
OCT. O my good lord!
Believe not all; or, if you must believe,
Stomach [7] not all. A more unhappy lady,

[5] wonderful. [6] forbid. [7] resent.

If this division chance, ne'er stood between,
Praying for both parts:
The good gods will mock me presently,
When I shall pray, "O! bless my lord and husband;"
Undo that prayer, by crying out as loud,
"O! bless my brother!" "Husband win, win brother,"
Prays and destroys the prayer; no midway
'Twixt these extremes at all.

ANT. Gentle Octavia,
Let your best love draw to that point which seeks
Best to preserve it. If I lose mine honor
I lose myself; better I were not yours
Than yours so branchless. But, as you requested,
Yourself shall go between's; the mean time, lady,
I'll raise the preparation of a war
Shall stain[8] your brother; make your soonest haste,
So your desires are yours.

OCT. Thanks to my lord.
The Jove of power make me, most weak, most weak,
Your reconciler! Wars 'twixt you twain would be
As if the world should cleave, and that slain men
Should solder up the rift.

ANT. When it appears to you where this begins,
Turn your displeasure that way; for our faults
Can never be so equal that your love
Can equally move with them. Provide your going;
Choose your own company, and command what cost
Your heart has mind to.

SCENE V

In a hall in ANTONY'S *house in Athens,* EROS *and* ENOBARBUS *meet.*

ENO. How now, friend Eros!

EROS. There's strange news come, sir.

ENO. What, man?

EROS. Cæsar and Lepidus have made wars upon Pompey.

ENO. This is old: what is the success?

EROS. Cæsar, having made use of him in the wars 'gainst Pompey, presently denied him rivality,[9] would not let him partake in the glory of the action; and, not resting here, accuses him of letters he had formerly wrote to Pompey; upon his own appeal, seizes him: so the poor third is up, till death enlarge his confine.

ENO. Then, world, thou hast a pair of chaps, no more;
And, throw between them all the food thou hast,
They'll grind the one the other. Where's Antony?

EROS. He's walking in the garden [*with illustrative action*] thus: and spurns
The rush that lies before him; cries, "Fool Lepidus!"
And threats the throat of that his officer
That murdered Pompey.

ENO. Our great navy's rigged.

EROS. For Italy and Cæsar. More, Domitius;
My lord desires you presently: my news
I might have told hereafter.

ENO. 'Twill be naught;
But let it be. Bring me to Antony.

EROS. Come, sir. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI

Sufficient time has elapsed for ANTONY *to have returned to* CLEOPATRA. CÆSAR *has got word of his doings, and, in his house in Rome, gives* AGRIPPA *and* MECÆNAS *his news.*

CÆS. Contemning Rome, he has done all this and more
In Alexandria; here's the manner of't;
I' th' market-place, on a tribunal silvered,
Cleopatra and himself in chairs of gold
Were publicly enthroned; at the feet[10] sat
Cæsarion, whom they call my father's son,
And all the unlawful issue that their lust

[8] put in the shade.

[9] equality.

[10] Should it be "the foot" or "their feet"?

Since then hath made between them. Unto her
He gave the stablishment of Egypt; made her
Of Lower Syria, Cyprus, Lydia, [20
Absolute queen.

MEC. This in the public eye?

CÆS. I' th' common show-place, where they exercise.
His sons he there proclaimed the kings of kings;
Great Media, Parthia, and Armenia
He gave to Alexander; to Ptolemy he assigned
Syria, Cilicia, and Phœnicia. She [30
In the habiliments of the goddess Isis
That day appeared, and oft before gave audience,
As 'tis reported, so.

MEC. Let Rome be thus Informed.

AGR. Who, queasy with his insolence
Already, will their good thoughts call from him.

CÆS. The people know it; and have now received [41
His accusations.

AGR. Whom does he accuse?

CÆS. Cæsar; and that, having in Sicily
Sextus Pompeius spoiled, we had not rated him
His part o' th' isle; then does he say he lent me
Some shipping unrestored; lastly, he frets
That Lepidus of the triumvirate [50
Should be deposed; and, being, that we detain
All his revénue.

AGR. Sir, this should be answered.

CÆS. 'Tis done already, and the messenger gone.
I have told him Lepidus was grown too cruel;
That he his high authority abused,
And did deserve his change: for what I have conquered, [61
I grant him part; but then, in his Armenia,
And other of his conquered kingdoms, I
Demand the like.

MEC. He'll never yield to that.

CÆS. Nor must not then be yielded to in this.

Enter OCTAVIA, *with her Train.*

OCT. Hail, Cæsar, and my lord! hail, most dear Cæsar! [71

CÆS. That ever I should call thee castaway!

OCT. You have not called me so, nor have you cause.

CÆS. Why have you stol'n upon us thus? You come not
Like Cæsar's sister; the wife of Antony
Should have an army for an usher, and
The neighs of horse to tell of her approach
Long ere she did appear; the trees by [81
the way
Should have borne men, and expectation fainted,
Longing for what it had not; nay, the dust
Should have ascended to the roof of heaven,
Raised by your populous troops. But you are come [90
A market-maid to Rome, and have prevented
The ostentation of our love, which, left unshown,
Is often left unloved: we should have met you
By sea and land, supplying every stage
With an augmented greeting.

OCT. Good my lord,
To come thus was I not constrained, but did it [101
On my free-will. My lord, Mark Antony,
Hearing that you prepared for war, acquainted
My grievëd ear withal; whereon, I begged
His pardon for return.

CÆS. Which soon he granted,
Being an óbstruct[11] 'tween his lust and him. [110

OCT. Do not say so, my lord.

CÆS. I have eyes upon him,
And his affairs come to me on the wind.
Where is hé now?

OCT. My lord, in Athens.

[11] B, abstract.

CÆS. No,
My most wronged sister; Cleopatra hath
Nodded him to her. He hath given his empire
Up to a whore; who now are levying [120
The kings o' th' earth for war. He hath assembled
Bocchus, the King of Libya; Archelaus,
Of Cappadocia; Philadelphos, King
Of Paphlagonia; the Thracian king, Adallas;
King Malchus of Arabia; King of Pont;
Herod of Jewry; Mithridates, King
Of Comagene; Polemon and Amintas,
The Kings of Mede and Lycaonia, [130
With a more larger list of sceptres.
OCT. Ay me, most wretched,
That have my heart parted betwixt two friends
That do afflict each other!
CÆS. Welcome hither:
Your letters did withhold our breaking forth,
Till we perceived both how you were wrong led [140
And we in negligent danger. Cheer your heart;
Be you not troubled with the time, which drives
O'er your content these strong necessities,
But let determined things to destiny
Hold unbewailed their way. Welcome to Rome;
Nothing more dear to me. You are abused [150
Beyond the mark of thought, and the high gods,
To do you justice, make their ministers
Of us and those that love you. Best of comfort,
And ever welcome to us!
AGR. Welcome, lady!
MEC. Welcome, dear madam!
Each heart in Rome does love and pity you; [160
Only th' adulterous Antony, most large
In his abominations, turns you off,
And gives his potent regiment[12] to a trull,
That noises it against us.

[12] dominion.

OCT. Is it so, sir?
CÆS. Most certain. Sister, welcome; pray you,
Be ever known to patience; my dear'st sister! [*Exeunt.* [170

SCENE VII

The struggle for the mastery of the Roman world is developing between CÆSAR *and* ANTONY. *The latter has established his camp near Actium. To the disgust of* ENOBARBUS, CLEOPATRA *has accompanied them. He comes to* ANTONY'S *tent, and finds* CLEOPATRA *there. She proceeds to make known her dissatisfaction with him.* [9

CLEO. I will be even with thee, doubt it not.
ENO. But why, why, why?
CLEO. Thou hast forspoke[13] my being in these wars,
And sayst it is not fit.
ENO. Well, is it, is it?
CLEO. Is't not denounced[14] against us? Why should not we
Be there in person?
ENO. <Well, I could reply: [20
If we should serve with horse and mares together,
The horse were merely lost; the mares would bear
A soldier and his horse.>
CLEO. What is't you say?
ENO. Your presence needs must puzzle Antony;
Take from his heart, take from his brain, from's time, [30
What should not then be spared. He is already
Traduced for levity, and 'tis said in Rome
That Photinus (an eunuch) and your maids
Manage this war.
CLEO. Sink Rome, and their tongues rot
That speak against us! A charge we bear i' th' war, [41
And, as the president of my kingdom, will

[13] objected to.
[14] declared.

Appear there for a man. Speak not against it;
I will not stay behind.
ENO. Nay, I have done.
Here comes the emperor.

Enter ANTONY *and* CANIDIUS. ANTONY *is talking of the news that has reached him of* CÆSAR'S *movements.*

ANT. Is it not strange, Canidius,
That from Tarentum and Brundusium
He could so quickly cut the Ionian sea,
And take in Toryne?—You have heard on't, sweet?
CLEO. Celerity is never more admired
Than by the negligent.
ANT. A good rebuke,
Which might have well becomed the best of men,
To taunt at slackness.—Canidius, we
Will fight with him by sea.
CLEO. By sea! What else?
CAN. Why will my lord do so?
ANT. For that he dares us to't.
ENO. So hath my lord dared him to single fight.
CAN. Ay, and to wage his battle at Pharsalia,
Where Cæsar fought with Pompey; but these offers,
Which serve not for his vantage, he shakes off;
And so should you.
ENO. Your ships are not well manned;
Your mariners are muleters, reapers, people
Ingrossed[15] by swift impréss; in Cæsar's fleet
Are those that often have 'gainst Pompey fought:
Their ships are yare; yours, heavy. No disgrace
Shall fall you for refusing him at sea,
Being prepared for land.
ANT. By sea, by sea.
ENO. Most worthy sir, you therein throw away
The absolute soldiership you have by land;
Distract your army, which doth most consist
Of war-marked footmen; leave unexecuted
Your own renownëd knowledge; quite forego
The way which promises assurance; and
Give up yourself merely to chance and hazard
From firm security.
ANT. I'll fight at sea.
CLEO. I have sixty sails, Cæsar none better.
ANT. Our overplus of shipping will we burn;
And with the rest, full-manned, from the head of Actium
Beat the approaching Cæsar. But, if we fail,
We then can do't at land.

Enter a MESSENGER.

Thy busïness?
MESS. The news is true, my lord; he is descried;
Cæsar has taken Toryne.
ANT. Can he be there in person? 'tis impossible;
Strange that his power should be.—Canidius,
Our nineteen legions thou shalt hold by land,
And our twelve thousand horse.—We'll to our ship:
Away, my Thetis!

Enter a SOLDIER, *battle-scarred.*

How now, worthy soldier!
SOLD. O noble emperor! do not fight by sea;
Trust not to rotten planks: do you misdoubt
This sword and these my wounds? Let the Egyptians
And the Phœnicians go a-ducking; we
Have used to conquer, standing on the earth,
And fighting foot to foot.
ANT. Well, well!—Away!
[*Exeunt* ANTONY, CLEOPATRA, *and* ENOBARBUS.

[15] enlisted.

SOLD. By Hercules, I think I am i' th' right.
CAN. Soldier, thou art; but his whole action grows
Not in the power on't: so our leader's led,
And we are women's men.
SOLD. You keep by land
The legions and the horse whole, do you not? [150
CAN. Marcus Octavius, Marcus Justeius,
Publicola, and Cælius, are for sea;
But we keep whole by land. This speed of Cæsar's
Carries beyond belief.
SOLD. While he was yet in Rome
His power went out in such distractions[16] as
Beguiled all spies. [160
CAN. Who's his lieutenant, hear you?
SOLD. They say, one Taurus.
CAN. Well I know the man.

Enter a MESSENGER.

MESS. The emperor calls Canidius.
CAN. With news the time's with labor, and throes forth
Each minute some. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VIII

CÆSAR *and* TAURUS, *with their army, have reached the vicinity of Actium. On a plain,* CÆSAR, *accompanied by Officers and others, gives* TAURUS *his final instructions.*

CÆS. Taurus!
TAUR. My lord?
CÆS. Strike not by land; keep whole: provoke not battle, [9
Till we have done at sea. Do not exceed
The prescript of this scroll: our fortune lies
Upon this jump.[17] [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IX

ANTONY, *on another part of the plain, gives his commands to* ENOBARBUS.

The army of CANIDIUS *is seen marching one way; that of* TAURUS *(on the rear stage), in the contrary direction.*

Later, a noise of a sea-fight is heard.

ANT. Set we our squadrons on yond side o' th' hill,
In eye of Cæsar's battle;[18] from which place [10
We may the number of the ships behold,
And so proceed accordingly. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE X

On a hillside, ENOBARBUS *is watching the progress of the battle at sea. He is distracted by what he sees.*

ENO. Naught, naught, all naught! I can behold no longer.
The "Antoniad," the Egyptian admiral,
With all their sixty, fly and turn the rudder;
To see't mine eyes are blasted. [9

Enter SCARUS, *deeply moved.*

SCAR. Gods and goddesses,
All the whole synod of them!
ENO. What's thy passion?
SCAR. The greater cantle[19] of the world is lost
With very ignorance; we have kissed away
Kingdoms and provinces.
ENO. How appears the fight?
SCAR. On our side like the tokened[20] pestilence, [21
Where death is sure. Yon ribaudred[21] nag of Egypt,
Whom leprosy o'ertake! i' th' midst o' th' fight,
When vantage like a pair of twins appeared,
Both as the same, or rather ours the elder,
The brize[22] upon her, like a cow in [30 June,
Hoists sails and flies.
ENO. That I beheld:
Mine eyes did sicken at the sight, and could not
Endure a further view.

16 divisions.
17 hazard.
18 army formation.
19 portion.
20 spotted.
21 ribald.
22 gadfly.

SCAR. She once being loofed,
The noble ruin of her magic, Antony,
Claps on his sea-wing, and, like a doting mallard,[23] [40
Leaving the fight in height, flies after her.
I never saw an action of such shame;
Experience, manhood, honor, ne'er before
Did violate so itself.
ENO. Alack, alack!

Enter CANIDIUS.

CAN. Our fortune on the sea is out of breath,
And sinks most lamentably. Had our general [51
Been what he knew himself, it had gone well:
O, he has given example for our flight
Most grossly by his own!
ENO. Ay, are you thereabouts?
Why, then, good night, indeed.
CAN. Toward Peloponnesus are they fled.
SCAR. 'Tis easy to't; and there I will attend [61
What further comes.
CAN. To Cæsar will I render
My legions and my horse; six kings already
Show me the way of yielding.
ENO. I'll yet follow
The wounded chance of Antony, though my reason
Sits in the wind against me. [*Exeunt.* [70

SCENE XI

ANTONY *is back in Alexandria in* CLEOPATRA'S *palace, utterly ashamed of his behavior. Some of his personal followers are with him.*

ANT. Hark! the land bids me tread no more upon't;
It is ashamed to bear me. Friends, come hither:
I am so lated[24] in the world that I
Have lost my way for ever. I have a [10 ship
Laden with gold; take that, divide it; fly,
And make your peace with Cæsar.
ATTENDANTS. Fly! not we.
ANT. I have fled myself, and have instructed cowards
To run and show their shoulders. Friends, be gone; [19
I have myself resolved upon a course
Which has no need of you; be gone:
My treasure's in the harbor, take it. O!
I followed that I blush to look upon:
My very hairs do mutiny, for the white
Reprove the brown for rashness, and they them
For fear and doting. Friends, be gone; you shall
Have letters from me to some friends that will [30
Sweep your way for you. Pray you, look not sad,
Nor make replies of loathness; take the hint
Which my despair proclaims; let that be left
Which leaves itself; to the sea-side straightway;
I will possess you of that ship and treasure. [40
Leave me, I pray, a little; pray you now:
Nay, do so; for, indeed, I have lost command;
Therefore I pray you. I'll see you by and by. [*Sits down, as they go out, and covers his face with his hands.*

Enter CLEOPATRA, *supported by* CHARMIAN *and* IRAS, *and followed by* EROS.

EROS. <Nay, gentle madam, to him, comfort him. [51
IRAS. Do, most dear queen.
CHAR. Do! Why, what else?
CLEO. Let me sit down. O Juno!>
[EROS *touches* ANTONY *on the shoulder.*
ANT. No, no, no, no, no!
EROS. See you here, sir?
ANT. O fie, fie, fie!
CHAR. Madam!
IRAS. Madam; O good empress! [60
EROS. Sir, sir!
ANT. Yes, my lord, yes. He, at Philippi kept

[23] drake.
[24] belated.

His sword e'en like a dancer, while I struck
The lean and wrinkled Cassius; and 'twas I
That the mad Brutus ended: he alone
Dealt on lieutenantry, and no practice had [70
In the brave squares of war: yet now—No matter.

CLEO. Ah! stand by.

EROS. The queen, my lord, the queen.

IRAS. Go to him, madam, speak to him;
He is unqualitied with very shame.

CLEO. Well then, sustain me: O!

EROS. Most noble sir, arise; the queen approaches:
Her head's declined, and death will seize her, but [81
Your comfort makes the rescue.

ANT. I have offended reputatiön,
A most unnoble swerving.

EROS. Sir, the queen.

ANT. O! whither hast thou led me, Egypt? See,
How I convey my shame out of thine eyes
By looking back what I have left behind
Stroyed in dishonor. [91

CLEO. O my lord, my lord!
Forgive my fearful sails: I little thought
You would have followed.

ANT. Egypt, thou knew'st too well
My heart was to thy rudder tied by th' strings,
And thou shouldst tow me after; o'er my spirit
Thy full supremacy thou knew'st, [100 and that
Thy beck might from the bidding of the gods
Command me.

CLEO. O! my pardon.

ANT. Now I must
To the young man send humble treaties,[25] dodge
And palter in the shifts of lowness, who
With half the bulk o' th' world played as I pleased, [111
Making and marring fortunes. You did know
How much you were my conqueror, and that
My sword, made weak by my affection, would
Obey it on all cause.

CLEO. Pardon, pardon!

ANT. Fall not a tear, I say; one of [120 them rates
All that is won and lost. Give me a kiss.
[*She kisses him.*
Even this repays me. We sent our schoolmaster;
Is he come back? Love, I am full of lead.—
[*Calling.*] Some wine, within there, and our viands!—Fortune knows, [129
We scorn her most when most she offers blows. [*Exeunt.*

[25] peace-proposals.

SCENE XII

CÆSAR *has landed in Egypt, and established his camp not far from Alexandria. He has received word that an envoy has come from* ANTONY. *He is accompanied by* DOLABELLA, THYREUS, *and others.*

CÆS. Let him appear that's come from Antony.
Know you him?

DOL. Cæsar, 'tis his schoolmaster:
An argument that he is plucked, when [10 hither
He sends so poor a pinion of his wing,
Which had superfluous kings for messengers
Not many moons gone by.

Enter EUPHRONIUS, *the teacher of* ANTONY'S *children by* CLEOPATRA.

CÆS. Approach, and speak.

EUPH. Such as I am, I come from Antony: [20
I was of late as petty to his ends
As is the morn-dew on the myrtle-leaf
To his grand sea.

CÆS. Be't so. Declare thine office.

EUPH. "Lord of his fortunes" he salutes thee, and
Requires[26] to live in Egypt; which not granted,
He lessens his requests, and to thee sues

[26] begs.

To let him breathe between the heavens and earth,
A private man in Athens; this for him.
Next, Cleopatra does confess thy greatness,
Submits her to thy might, and of thee craves
The circle[27] of the Ptolemies for her heirs,
Now hazarded to thy grace.
CÆS. For Antony,
I have no ears to his request. The queen
Of audience nor desire shall fail, so she
From Egypt drive her all-disgracëd friend,
Or take his life there; this if she perform,
She shall not sue unheard. So to them both.
EUPH. Fortune pursue thee!
CÆS. Bring him through the bands. [*Exit* EUPHRONIUS.
[*To* THYREUS.] To try thy eloquence, now 'tis time; dispatch.
From Antony win Cleopatra; promise,
And in our name, what she requires; add more,
From thine invention, offers. Women are not
In their best fortunes strong, but want will perjure
The ne'er-touched vestal. Try thy cunning, Thyreus;[28]
Make thine own edict for thy pains, which we
Will answer as a law.
THYR. Cæsar, I go.
CÆS. Observe how Antony becomes his flaw,[29]
And what thou think'st his very action speaks
In every power that moves.
THYR. Cæsar, I shall. [*Exit.*

SCENE XIII

In the palace in Alexandria, ENOBARBUS *is with* CLEOPATRA, *on whom* CHARMIAN *and* IRAS *are in attendance.*

CLEO. What shall we do, Enobarbus?
ENO. Think, and die.
CLEO. Is Antony or we in fault for this?
ENO. Antony only, that would make his will
Lord of his reason. What though you fled
From that great face of war, whose several ranges
Frighted each other, why should he follow?
The itch of his affection should not then
Have nicked his captainship, at such a point,
When half to half the world opposed, he being
The merëd question. 'Twas a shame no less
Than was his loss, to course your flying flags,
And leave his navy gazing.
CLEO. Prithee, peace.

Enter ANTONY, *with* EUPHRONIUS, *who has just delivered to him* CÆSAR'S *reply.*

ANT. Is that his answer?
EUPH. Ay, my lord.
ANT. The queen shall then have courtesy, so she
Will yield us up?
EUPH. He says so.
ANT. Let her know't.
To the boy Cæsar send this grizzled head,
And he will fill thy wishes to the brim
With principalities.
CLEO. That head, my lord?
ANT. To him again. Tell him he wears the rose
Of youth upon him, from which the world should note
Something particular; his coin, ships, legions,
May be a coward's, whose ministers would prevail
Under the service of a child as soon
As i' th' command of Cæsar: I dare him therefore
To lay his gay comparisons[30] apart,

[27] crown.
[28] B, Thidias.
[29] takes his misfortune.
[30] May be a misprint for "caparisons."

And answer me declined, sword against sword,
Ourselves alone. I'll write it: follow me.
[*Exeunt* ANTONY *and* EUPHRONIUS.
ENO. <Yes, like enough, high-battled Cæsar will
Unstate his happiness, and be staged to the show [61
Against a sworder! I see men's judgments are
A parcel of their fortunes, and things outward
Do draw the inward quality after them,
To suffer all alike. That he should dream,
Knowing all measures, the full Cæsar will
Answer his emptiness!—Cæsar, thou hast subdued [71
His judgment too.>

Enter an Attendant.

ATT. A messenger from Cæsar.
CLEO. What! no more ceremony?—See! my women;
Against the blown rose may they stop their nose,
That kneeled unto the buds.—Admit him, sir. [*Exit Attendant.* [80
ENO. <Mine honesty and I begin to square.
The loyalty well held to fools does make
Our faith mere folly; yet he that can endure
To follow with allegiance a fall'n lord,
Does conquer him that did his master conquer,
And earns a place i' th' story.> [89

Enter THYREUS.

CLEO. Cæsar's will?
THYR. Hear it apart.
CLEO. None but friends; say boldly.
THYR. So, haply, are they friends to Antony.
ENO. He needs as many, sir, as Cæsar has,
Or needs not us. If Cæsar please, our master
Will leap to be his friend; for us, [100 you know
Whose he is we are, and that is Cæsar's.
THYR. So!
Thus then, thou most renowned: Cæsar entreats,
Not to consider in what case thou stand'st,
Further than he is Cæsar.
CLEO. Go on; right royal!
THYR. He knows that you embrace not Antony [111
As you did love, but as you feared him.
CLEO. O!
THYR. The scars upon your honor therefore he
Does pity, as constrainëd blemishes,
Not as deserved.
CLEO. He is a god, and knows
What is most right. Mine honor was not yielded, [120
But conquered merely.
ENO. <To be sure of that,
I will ask Antony.—Sir, sir, thou art so leaky,
That we must leave thee to thy sinking, for
Thy dearest quit thee.> [*Exit.*
THYR. Shall I say to Cæsar
What you require of him? for he partly begs [130
To be desired to give. It much would please him,
That of his fortunes you should make a staff
To lean upon; but it would warm his spirits
To hear from me you had left Antony,
And put yourself under his shroud,[31]
The universal landlord.
CLEO. What's your name? [140
THYR. My name is Thyreus.[32]
CLEO. Most kind messenger,
Say to great Cæsar this: in deputation[33]
I kiss his conqu'ring hand; tell him, I am prompt
To lay my crown at's feet, and there to kneel;
Tell him, from his all-obeying breath I hear
The doom of Egypt. [150
THYR. 'Tis your noblest course.

[31] protection.
[32] B, Thidias.
[33] by deputy.

Wisdom and fortune combating together,
If that the former dare but what it can,
No chance may shake it. Give me grace to lay
My duty on your hand.
CLEO. Your Cæsar's father oft,
When he hath mused of taking kingdoms in,
Bestowed his lips on that unworthy place,
As it rained kisses. [161

Re-enter ANTONY *and* ENOBARBUS.

ANT. <Favors, by Jove that thunders!>
What art thou, fellow?
THYR. One that but performs
The bidding of the fullest man, and worthiest
To have command obeyed.
ENO. <You will be whipped.> [170
ANT., *calling.* Approach there!—Ah, you kite!—Now, gods and devils!
Authority melts from me: of late, when I cried "Ho!"
Like boys unto a muss,[34] kings would start forth,
And cry, "Your will?" [*Calling.*] Have you no ears? I am
Antony yet. [179

Enter Attendants.

Take hence this Jack and whip him.
ENO. <'Tis better playing with a lion's whelp
Than with an old one dying.>
ANT. Moon and stars!—
Whip him.—Were't twenty of the greatest tributaries
That do acknowledge Cæsar, should I find them
So saucy with the hand of—she, [190 here, what's her name,
Since she was Cleopatra? Whip him, fellows,
Till, like a boy, you see him cringe his face
And whine aloud for mercy; take him hence.
THYR. Mark Antony,—
ANT. Tug him away; being whipped,
Bring him again; this Jack of Cæsar's shall [201
Bear us an errand to him.—[*Exeunt Attendants with* THYREUS.
You were half blasted ere I knew you: ha!
Have I my pillow left unpressed in Rome,
Forborne the getting of a lawful race,
And by a gem of women, to be abused
By one that looks on feeders?[35] [210
CLEO. Good my lord,—
ANT. You have been a boggler ever;
But, when we in our viciousness grow hard—
O misery on't!—the wise gods seel our eyes;
In our own filth drop our clear judgments; make us
Adore our errors; laugh at's while we strut [220
To our confusion.
CLEO. O! is't come to this?
ANT. I found you as a morsel cold upon
Dead Cæsar's trencher; nay, you were a fragment
Of Cneius Pompey's; besides what hotter hours,
Unregistered in vulgar fame, you have
Luxuriously[36] picked out; for, I am sure,
Though you can guess what temperance[37] should be, [232
You know not what it is.
CLEO. Wherefore is this?
ANT. To let a fellow that will take rewards
And say "God quit you!" be familiar with
My playfellow, your hand; this kingly seal [240
And plighter of high hearts.—O! that I were
Upon the hill of Basan, to outroar
The hornëd herd; for I have savage cause;
And to proclaim it civilly were like
A haltered neck, which does the hangman thank

[34] scramble.
[35] parasites.
[36] lewdly.
[37] chastity.

For being yare about him. [249

Re-enter Attendants, with THYREUS.

Is he whipped?

1 ATT. Soundly, my lord.

ANT. Cried he? and begged 'a pardon?

1 ATT. He did ask favor.

ANT. If that thy father live, let him repent
Thou wast not made his daughter; and be thou sorry [259
To follow Cæsar in his triumph, since
Thou hast been whipped for following him: henceforth,
The white hand of a lady fever thee,
Shake thou to look on't. Get thee back to Cæsar,
Tell him thy entertainment; look thou say
He makes me angry with him; for he seems
Proud and disdainful, harping on [270 what I am,
Not what he knew I was: he makes me angry;
And at this time most easy 'tis to do't,
When my good stars, that were my former guides,
Have empty left their orbs, and shot their fires
Into th' abysm of hell. If he mislike
My speech and what is done, tell him he has [281
Hipparchus, my enfranchëd bondman, whom
He may at pleasure whip or hang or torture,
As he shall like, to quit me: urge it thou:
Hence with thy stripes; be gone! [*Exit* THYREUS.

CLEO. Have you done yet?

ANT. Alack! our terrene moon [290
Is now eclipsed; and it portends alone
The fall of Antony.

CLEO. <I must stay his time.>

ANT. To flatter Cæsar, would you mingle eyes
With one that ties his points?

CLEO. Not know me yet?

ANT. Cold-hearted toward me?

CLEO. Ah! dear, if I be so,
From my cold heart let heaven engender hail, [301
And poison it in the source; and the first stone
Drop in my neck: as it determines, so
Dissolve my life. The next Cæsarion smite,
Till by degrees the memory of my womb,
Together with my brave Egyptians all,
By the discandying[38] of this pelleted storm, [310
Lie graveless, till the flies and gnats of Nile
Have buried them for prey!

ANT. I am satisfied.
Cæsar sits down in Alexandria, where
I will oppose his fate. Our force by land
Hath nobly held; our severed navy too
Have knit again, and fleet,[39] threat'ning most sea-like.
Where hast thou been, my heart? Dost thou hear, lady? [321
If from the field I shall return once more
To kiss these lips, I will appear in blood;
I and my sword will earn our chronicle:
There's hope in't yet.

CLEO. That's my brave lord!

ANT. I will be treble-sinewed, hearted, breathed,
And fight maliciously; for, when mine [330 hours
Were nice and lucky, men did ransom lives
Of me for jests; but now I'll set my teeth,
And send to darkness all that stop me.—Come,
Let's have one other gaudy night: call to me
All my sad captains; fill our bowls once more; [341
Let's mock the midnight bell.

CLEO. It is my birth-day:
I had thought to have held it poor; but, since my lord
Is Antony again, I will be Cleopatra.

ANT. We will yet do well.

[38] melting.
[39] float.

CLEO. Call all his noble captains to my lord.
ANT. Do so, we'll speak to them; and to-night I'll force [351
The wine peep through their scars.—Come on, my queen;
There's sap in't yet. The next time I do fight
I'll make death love me, for I will contend
Even with his pestilent scythe. [*Exeunt all but* ENOBARBUS.
ENO. Now he'll outstare the lightning. To be furious [361
Is to be frighted out of fear, and in that mood
The dove will peck the estridge;[40] and, I see still,
A diminution in our captain's brain
Restores his heart. When valor preys on reason
It eats the sword it fights with. I will seek [370
Some way to leave him. [*Exit.*

ACT FOUR

SCENE I

CÆSAR, *in his camp, the same day, is reading a letter from* ANTONY. AGRIPPA, MECÆNAS, *and others are with him.*

CÆS. He calls me boy, and chides as he had power
To beat me out of Egypt; my messenger
He hath whipped with rods; dares me to personal combat,
Cæsar to Antony. Let the old ruffian know [10
I have many other ways to die; meantime
Laugh at his challenge.
MEC. Cæsar must think,
When one so great begins to rage, he's hunted
Even to falling. Give him no breath, but now
Make boot of his distraction: never anger [20
Made good guard for itself.
CÆS. Let our best heads
Know that to-morrow the last of many battles
We mean to fight. Within our files there are,
Of those that served Mark Antony but late,
Enough to fetch him in. See it done;
And feast the army; we have store to do't, [31
And they have earned the waste.—Poor Antony!

SCENE II

In the palace, the same day, ANTONY *has received* CÆSAR'S *reply to his challenge.* CLEOPATRA, ENOBARBUS, CHARMIAN, IRAS, ALEXAS, *and others are with him.*

ANT. He will not fight with me, Domitius.
ENO. No.
ANT. Why should he not? [9
ENO. He thinks, being twenty times of better fortune,
He is twenty men to one.
ANT. To-morrow, soldier,
By sea and land I'll fight: or I will live
Or bathe my dying honor in the blood
Shall make it live again. Woo't thou fight well?
ENO. I'll strike, and cry, "Take all."
ANT. Well said; come on.
Call forth my household servants; let's to-night [21
Be bounteous at our meal.

Enter half-a-dozen Servitors.

Give me thy hand;
Thou hast been rightly honest. So hast thou;
Thou, and thou, and thou: you have served me well,
And kings have been your fellows.
CLEO. <What means this? [30
ENO. 'Tis one of those odd tricks which sorrow shoots
Out of the mind.>
ANT. And thou art honest too.
I wish I could be made so many men,
And all of you clapped up together in

[40] ostrich.

An Antony, that I might do you service
So good as you have done.
SERVANTS. The gods forbid!
ANT. Well, my good fellows, wait on me to-night;
Scant not my cups, and make as much of me
As when mine empire was your fellow too,
And suffered my command.
CLEO. <What does he mean?
ENO. To make his followers weep.>
ANT. Tend me to-night;
May be it is the period of your duty:
Haply, you shall not see me more; or if,
A mangled shadow: perchance to-morrow
You'll serve another master. I look on you
As one that takes his leave. Mine honest friends,
I turn you not away; but, like a master
Married to your good service, stay till death.
Tend me to-night two hours, I ask no more,
And the gods yield[1] you for't!
ENO. What mean you, sir,
To give them this discomfort? Look, they weep;
And I, an ass, am onion-eyed: for shame!
Transform us not to women.
ANT. Ho, ho, ho!
Now, the witch take me, if I meant it thus!
Grace grow where those drops fall! My hearty friends,
You take me in too dolorous a sense,
For I spake to you for your comfort; did desire you
To burn this night with torches. Know, my hearts,
I hope well of to-morrow; and will lead you
Where rather I'll expect victorious life
Than death and honor. Let's to supper, come,
And drown consideration. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

In front of the palace, the same night; two SOLDIERS *enter to their watch. Another watch seen in the background.*

1 SOLD. Brother, good night; to-morrow is the day.
2 SOLD. It will determine one way; fare you well.
Heard you of nothing strange about the streets?
1 SOLD. Nothing. What news?
2 SOLD. Belike 'tis but a rumor. Good night to you.
1 SOLD. Well, sir, good night.

Enter two other SOLDIERS.

2 SOLD. Soldiers, have careful watch.
3 SOLD. And you. Good night, good night. [*The first two place themselves at their posts.*
4 SOLD. Here we; and, if to-morrow
Our navy thrive, I have an absolute hope
Our landmen will stand up.
3 SOLD. 'Tis a brave army,
And full of purpose. [*Music of hautboys under the stage.*
4 SOLD. Peace! what noise?
1 SOLD. List, list!
2 SOLD. Hark!
1 SOLD. Music i' th' air.
3 SOLD. Under the earth.
4 SOLD. It signs well, does it not?
3 SOLD. No.
1 SOLD. Peace, I say!
What should this mean?
2 SOLD. 'Tis the god Hercules, whom Antony loved,
Now leaves him.
1 SOLD. Walk; let's see if other watchmen
Do hear what we do. [*They march to the post in the rear.*
2 SOLD. How now, masters!
SOLDIERS. How now!—
How now!—do you hear this?
1 SOLD. Ay; is't not strange?
3 SOLD. Do you hear, masters? do you hear?
1 SOLD. Follow the noise so far as we have quarter;
Let's see how it will give off.
SOLDIERS, *speaking together.* Content.—
'Tis strange. [*Exeunt.*

[1] reward.

Scene IV

Early the next morning Antony *is ready for the fray; but* Cleopatra *is loth for him to depart.* Charmian *and others are in attendance.*

Ant., *calling.* Eros! mine armor, Eros!
Cleo. Sleep a little.
Ant. No, my chuck. [*Calling.*] Eros, come; mine armor, Eros!

Enter Eros, *with armor.*

Come, good fellow, put mine iron on: [10
If Fortune be not ours to-day, it is
Because we brave her.—Come.
Cleo. Nay, I'll help too.[2]
What's this for?
Ant. Ah! let be, let be; thou art
The armorer of my heart: false, false; this, this.
Cleo. Sooth, la! I'll help: thus it must be.
Ant. Well, well; [20
We shall thrive now.—Seest thou, my good fellow?
Go put on thy defences.
Eros. Briefly, sir.
Cleo. Is not this buckled well?
Ant. Rarely, rarely:
He that unbuckles this, till we do please
To daff't for our repose, shall hear a storm.—
Thou fumblest, Eros; and my queen's a squire [31
More tight[3] at this than thou: dispatch. —O love!
That thou could see my wars to-day, and knew'st
The royal occupation! thou shouldst see
A workman in't.

Enter an armed Soldier.

Good morrow to thee; welcome;
Thou look'st like him that knows a warlike charge: [41
To business that we love we rise betime,
And go to't with delight.
Sold. A thousand, sir,
Early though't be, have on their riveted trim,
And at the port expect you. [*Shout. Trumpets flourish.*

Enter Captains and Soldiers.

Capt. The morn is fair. Good mor- [50
row, general.
All. Good morrow, general.
Ant. 'Tis well blown, lads.
This morning, like the spirit of a youth
That means to be of note, begins betimes.
So, so! come, give me that: this way; well said.[4]
Fare thee well, dame, whate'er becomes of me;
This is a soldier's kiss. [*Kisses her.*] Rebukeable [61
And worthy shameful check[5] it were, to stand
On more mechanic[6] compliment; I'll leave thee
Now, like a man of steel.—You that will fight,
Follow me close; I'll bring you to't.—Adieu. [*Exeunt* Antony, Eros, *Captains and Soldiers.* [70
Char. Please you, retire to your chamber.
Cleo. Lead me.
He goes forth gallantly. That he and Cæsar might
Determine this great war in single fight!
Then, Antony,—but now.—Well, on.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene V

Trumpets sound in Antony's *camp. A* Soldier *enters to* Antony *and* Eros.

Sold. The gods make this a happy day to Antony!
Ant. Would thou and those thy scars had once prevailed
To make me fight at land!
Sold. Hadst thou done so,
The kings that have revolted, and the soldier [10
That has this morning left thee, would have still
Followed thy heels.
Ant. Who's gone this morning?

[2] F adds, "Anthony."
[3] expert.
[4] done.
[5] reprimand.
[6] vulgar.

SOLD. Who!
One ever near thee: call for Enobarbus,
He shall not hear thee, or from Cæsar's camp
Say, "I am none of thine."
ANT. What sayest thou? [20
SOLD. Sir,
He is with Cæsar.
EROS. Sir, his chests and treasure
He has not with him.
ANT. Is he gone?
SOLD. Most certain.
ANT. Go, Eros, send his treasure after; do it;
Detain no jot, I charge thee. Write to him— [30
I will subscribe—gentle adieus and greetings;
Say that I wish he never find more cause
To change a master.—O! my fortunes have
Corrupted honest men.—Dispatch.—Enobarbus! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI

In CÆSAR'S *camp, just before the fight begins,* AGRIPPA, ENOBARBUS, *and others are with* CÆSAR.

CÆS. Go forth, Agrippa, and begin the fight:
Our will is Antony be took alive;
Make it so known.
AGR. Cæsar, I shall. [*Exit.*
CÆS. The time of universal peace is near: [10
Prove this a prosp'rous day, the three-nooked world
Shall bear the olive freely.

Enter a MESSENGER.

MESS. Antony
Is come into the field.
CÆS. Go charge Agrippa
Plant those that have revolted in the van,
That Antony may seem to spend his fury
Upon himself. [*Exeunt* CÆSAR *and his Train.* [21
ENO. Alexas did revolt, and went to Jewry on
Affairs of Antony; there did persuade
Great Herod to incline himself to Cæsar,
And leave his master Antony: for this pains
Cæsar hath hanged him. Canidius and the rest [29
That fell away have entertainment, but
No honorable trust. I have done ill,
Of which I do accuse myself so sorely
That I will joy no more

Enter a SOLDIER *of* CÆSAR'S.

SOLD. Enobarbus, Antony
Hath after thee sent all thy treasure, with
His bounty overplus: the messenger
Came on my guard; and at thy tent is now [40
Unloading of his mules.
ENO. I give it you.
SOLD. Mock not, Enobarbus.
I tell you true: best you safed the bringer
Out of the host; I must attend mine office,
Or would have done't myself. Your emperor
Continues still a Jove. [*Exit.*
ENO. I am alone the villain of the earth, [51
And feel I am so most. O Antony!
Thou mine of bounty, how wouldst thou have paid
My better service, when my turpitude
Thou dost so crown with gold! This blows my heart:
If swift thought break it not, a swifter mean
Shall outstrike thought; but thought will do't, I feel. [61
I fight against thee! No: I will go seek
Some ditch, wherein to die; the foul'st best fits
My latter part of life. [*Exit.*

SCENE VII

On the field of battle, there are alarums and a blare of drums and trumpets. AGRIPPA *and others enter in retreat.*

AGR. Retire, we have engaged ourselves too far.
Cæsar himself has work, and our oppression [7]

[7] opposition.

Exceeds what we expected. [*Exeunt.*

Scene VIII

In another part of the battlefield Antony *and* Scarus *(who is wounded) survey the turn of affairs with satisfaction.*

Scar. O my brave emperor, this is fought indeed!
Had we done so at first, we had droven them home
With clouts about their heads.
Ant. Thou bleed'st apace.
Scar. I had a wound here that was like a T,
But now 'tis made an H.
Ant. They do retire.
Scar. We'll beat 'em into bench-holes: I have yet
Room for six scotches more.

Enter Eros.

Eros. They are beaten, sir; and our advantage serves
For a fair victory.
Scar. Let us score their backs,
And snatch 'em up, as we take hares, behind:
'Tis sport to maul a runner.
Ant. I will reward thee
Once for thy sprightly comfort, and tenfold
For thy good valor. Come thee on.
Scar. I'll halt after. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IX

Having vanquished the opposing force, Antony, Scarus, *and their troops arrive before the walls of Alexandria.*

Ant. We have beat him to his camp; run one before
And let the queen know of our gests.[8] To-morrow,
Before the sun shall see's, we'll spill the blood
That has to-day escaped. I thank you all;
For doughty-handed are you, and have fought
Not as you served the cause, but as't had been
Each man's like mine; you have shown all Hectors.
Enter the city, clip your wives, your friends,
Tell them your feats; whilst they with joyful tears
Wash the congealment from your wounds, and kiss
The honored gashes whole. [*To* Scarus.] Give me thy hand:

Enter Cleopatra, *attended.*

To this great fairy I'll commend thy acts,
Make her thanks bless thee.—O thou day o' th' world!
Chain mine armed neck; leap thou, attire and all,
Through proof of harness to my heart, and there
Ride on the pants triúmphing.
Cleo. Lord of lords!
O infinite virtue![9] com'st thou smiling from
The world's great snare uncaught?
Ant. My nightingale,
We have beat them to their beds. What, girl! though grey
Do something mingle with our younger brown, yet ha' we
A brain that nourishes our nerves, and can
Get goal for goal of youth. Behold this man;
Commend unto his lips thy favoring hand:—
Kiss it, my warrior:—he hath fought to-day
As if a god, in hate of mankind, had
Destroyed in such a shape.
Cleo. I'll give thee, friend,
An armor all of gold; it was a king's.
Ant. He has deserved it, were it carbuncled
Like holy Phœbus' car.—Give me thy hand:
Through Alexandria make a jolly march;
Bear our hacked targets like the men that owe[10] them:
Had our great palace the capacity

[8] deeds.
[9] manliness.
[10] own.

To camp this host, we all would sup together
And drink carouses to the next day's fate,
Which promises royal peril.—Trumpeters, [70
With brazen din blast you the city's ear,
Make mingle with our rattling tabourines,
That heaven and earth may strike their sounds together,
Applauding our approach. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE X

The sentinels in CÆSAR'S *camp are at their posts the night of the same day.*

1 SOLD. If we be not relieved within this hour,
We must return to th' court of guard: the night
Is shiny, and they say we shall embattle
By th' second hour i' th' morn.
2 SOLD. This last day was
A shrewd one to's. [10

Enter ENOBARBUS.

ENO. O! bear me witness, night,—
3 SOLD. <What man is this?
2 SOLD. Stand close and list [to] him.>
ENO. Be witness to me, O thou blessëd moon,
When men revolted shall upon recórd
Bear hateful memory, poor Enobarbus did
Before thy face repent! [20
1 SOLD. <Enobarbus!
3 SOLD. Peace!
Hark further.>
ENO. O sovereign mistress of true melancholy,
The poisonous damp of night disponge[11] upon me,
That life, a very rebel to my will,
May hang no longer on me; throw my heart [30
Against the flint and hardness of my fault,
Which, being dried with grief, will break to powder,
And finish all foul thoughts. O Antony!
Nobler than my revolt is infamous,
Forgive me in thine own particular;
But let the world rank me in register
A master-leaver and a fugitive.
O Antony! O Antony! [*Dies.* [40
2 SOLD. Let's speak to him.
1 SOLD. Let's hear him, for the things he speaks
May concern Cæsar.
3 SOLD. Let's do so. But he sleeps.
1 SOLD. Swounds rather; for so bad a prayer as his
Was never yet for sleep.
2 SOLD. Go we to him.
3 SOLD. Awake, sir, awake! speak to us.
2 SOLD. Hear you, sir? [51
1 SOLD. The hand of death hath raught[12] him. [*Drums far off.* Hark! the drums
Demurely wake the sleepers. Let us bear him
To th' court of guard; he is of note: our hour
Is fully out.
3 SOLD. Come on, then; [60
He may recover yet. [*Exeunt with the body.*

SCENE XI

The next morning, ANTONY, SCARUS, *and their troops are early up, marching across the field of battle.*

ANT. Their preparation is to-day by sea;
We please them not by land.
SCAR. For both, my lord.
ANT. I would they'd fight i' th' fire or i' th' air;
We'd fight there too; but this it is: our foot [11
Upon the hills adjoining to the city
Shall stay with us; order for sea is given;
They have put forth the haven. [Let us take stand]
Where their appointment we may best discover
And look on their endeavor. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE XII

CÆSAR *and his troops are on another part of the plain.* CÆSAR *is explaining his strategy.*

[11] fall.

[12] reached.

CÆS. But, being charged, we will be still by land,
Which, as I take't, we shall; for his best force
Is forth to man his galleys. To the vales,
And hold our best advantage! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE XIII

On a hill-side, ANTONY *and* SCARUS *overlook the waterside.*

ANT. Yet they are not joined. Where yond pine does stand
I shall discover all; I'll bring thee word
Straight how 'tis like to go. [*Exit.*
SCAR. Swallows have built
In Cleopatra's sails their nests; the augurers
Say they know not, they cannot tell; look grimly,
And dare not speak their knowledge. Antony
Is valiant, and dejected; and, by starts,
His fretted fortunes give him hope and fear
Of what he has and has not. [*Alarum afar off, as at a sea-fight.*

Re-enter ANTONY.

ANT. All is lost!
This foul Egyptian hath betrayëd me;
My fleet hath yielded to the foe, and yonder
They cast their caps up and carouse together
Like friends long lost.—Triple-turned whore! 'tis thou
Hast sold me to this novice, and my heart
Makes only wars on thee.—Bid them all fly;
For, when I am revenged upon my charm,
I have done all. Bid them all fly; be gone. [*Exit* SCARUS.
O sun! thy uprise shall I see no more;
Fortune and Antony part here; even here
Do we shake hands. All come to this? The hearts
That spanieled me at heels, to whom I gave
Their wishes, do discandy, melt their sweets
On blossoming Cæsar; and this pine is barked,
That overtopped them all. Betrayed I am.
O this false soul of Egypt! this grave charm,
Whose eyes becked forth my wars, and called them home,
Whose bosom was my crownet, my chief end,
Like a right gipsy, hath, at fast and loose,
Beguiled me to the very heart of loss.—
[*Calling.*] What, Eros! Eros!

Enter CLEOPATRA.

Ah! thou spell. Avaunt!
CLEO. Why is my lord enraged against his love?
ANT. Vanish, or I shall give thee thy deserving,
And blemish Cæsar's triumph. Let him take thee,
And hoist thee up to the shouting plébeians;
Follow his chariot, like the greatest spot
Of all thy sex; most monster-like, be shown
For poor'st diminutives, for dolts; and let
Patient Octavia plough thy visage up
With her preparëd nails. [*Exit* CLEOPATRA.
'Tis well, th' art gone,
If it be well to live; but better 'twere
Thou fell'st into my fury, for one death
Might have prevented many.—[*Calling.*] Eros, ho!
The shirt of Nessus is upon me; teach me,
Alcides, thou mine ancestor, thy rage;
Let me lodge Lichas on the horns o' th' moon;
And with those hands, that grasped the heaviest club,
Subdue my worthiest self. The witch shall die:
To the young Roman boy she hath sold me, and I fall
Under this plot; she dies for't.—[*Calling.*] Eros, ho! [*Exit.*

Scene XIV

In the Queen's palace, Cleopatra *seeks help of* Charmian, Iras, *and* Mardian.

Cleo. Help me, my women! O! he is more mad
Than Telamon for his shield; the boar of Thessaly
Was never so embossed.[13]
Char. To th' monument!
There lock yourself, and send him word you are dead. [10
The soul and body rive not more in parting
Than greatness going off.
Cleo. To th' monument!—
Mardian, go tell him I have slain myself;
Say that the last I spoke was "Antony,"
And word it, prithee, piteously. Hence,
Mardian, and bring me how he takes my death.—
To th' monument! [*Exeunt.* [20

Scene XV

In another room of the palace, Antony, *in deepest dejection, is with the faithful* Eros.

Ant. Eros, thou yet behold'st me?
Eros. Ay, noble lord.
Ant. Sometime we see a cloud that's dragonish;
A vapor sometime like a bear or lion,
A towered citadel, a pendant rock, [9
A forkëd mountain, or blue promontory
With trees upon't, that nod unto the world
And mock our eyes with air: thou hast seen these signs;
They are black vesper's pageants.
Eros. Ay, my lord.
Ant. That which is now a horse, even with a thought
The rack dislimns and makes it indistinct,
As water is in water. [20
Eros. It does, my lord.
Ant. My good knave, Eros, now thy captain is
Even such a body: here I am Antony,
Yet cannot hold this visible shape, my knave.
I made these wars for Egypt; and the queen,
Whose heart I thought I had, for she had mine, [30
Which whilst it was mine had annexed unto't
A million more, now lost; she, Eros, has
Packed[14] cards with Cæsar, and false-played my glory
Unto an enemy's triumph.
Nay, weep not, gentle Eros; there is left us
Ourselves to end ourselves. [39

Enter Mardian.

O! thy vild lady,
She has robbed me of my sword.
Mar. No, Antony;
My mistress loved thee, and her fortunes mingled
With thine entirely.
Ant. Hence, saucy eunuch; peace!
She hath betrayed me, and shall die the death.
Mar. Death of one person can be paid but once, [51
And that she has discharged. What thou wouldst do
Is done unto thy hand: the last she spake
Was, "Antony! most noble Antony!"
Then in the midst a tearing groan did break
The name of Antony; it was divided
Between her heart and lips. She rendered life, [60
Thy name so buried in her.
Ant. Dead, then?
Mar. Dead.
Ant. Unarm, Eros; the long day's task is done,
And we must sleep. [*To* Mardian.] That thou depart'st hence safe
Does pay thy labor richly; go. [*Exit* Mardian.] Off, pluck off!
The seven-fold shield of Ajax cannot keep [71
The battery from my heart.—O! cleave, my sides;
Heart, once be stronger than thy continent,[15]

[13] Never so foamed at the mouth.
[14] shuffled dishonestly.
[15] container.

Crack thy frail case!—Apace, Eros, apace!—
No more a soldier; bruisëd pieces, go;
You have been nobly borne. From me awhile. [*Exit* Eros. [80
I will o'ertake thee, Cleopatra, and
Weep for my pardon. So it must be, for now
All length is torture; since the torch is out,
Lie down, and stray no farther. Now all labor
Mars what it does; yea, very force entangles
Itself with strength; seal, then, and all is done.— [91
[*Calling.*] Eros!—I come, my queen.—[*Calling.*] Eros!—Stay for me:
Where souls do couch on flowers, we'll hand in hand,
And with our sprightly port make the ghosts gaze;
Dido and her Æneas shall want troops,
And all the haunt be ours.—[*Calling.*] Come, Eros! Eros! [100

Re-enter Eros.

Eros. What would my lord?
Ant. Since Cleopatra died,
I have lived in such dishonor, that the gods
Detest my baseness. I, that with my sword
Quartered the world, and o'er green Neptune's back
With ships made cities, condemn myself to lack [111
The courage of a woman; less noble mind
Than she, which by her death our Cæsar tells
"I am conqueror of myself." Thou art sworn, Eros,
That, when the exigent should come—which now
Is come indeed—when I should see behind me [120
Th' inevitable prosecution[16] of
Disgrace and horror, that, on my command,

[16] pursuit.

Thou then wouldst kill me: do't; the time is come.
Thou strik'st not me, 'tis Cæsar thou defeat'st.
Put color in thy cheek.
Eros. The gods withhold me!
Shall I do that which all the Parthian darts, [131
Though enemy, lost aim and could not?
Ant. Eros,
Wouldst thou be windowed in great Rome, and see
Thy master thus with pleached arms, bending down
His corrigible neck, his face subdued
To penetrative shame, whilst the wheeled seat [140
Of fortunate Cæsar, drawn before him, branded
His baseness that ensued?
Eros. I would not see't.
Ant. Come, then; for with a wound I must be cured.
Draw that thy honest sword, which thou hast worn
Most useful for thy country.
Eros. O, sir! pardon me. [150
Ant. When I did make thee free, swor'st thou not then
To do this when I bade thee? Do it at once,
Or thy precédent services are all
But accidents unpurposed. Draw, and come.
Eros. Turn from me then that noble countenance,
Wherein the worship of the whole world lies. [161
Ant. Lo thee! [*Turning from him.*
Eros. My sword is drawn.
Ant. Then let it do at once
The thing why thou hast drawn it.
Eros. My dear master,
My captain, and my emperor, let me say,
Before I strike this bloody stroke, farewell.
Ant. 'Tis said, man; and farewell. [170
Eros. Farewell, great chief. Shall I strike now?
Ant. Now, Eros.

EROS. Why, there then; thus do I escape the sorrow
Of Antony's death. [*Kills himself.*
ANT. Thrice-nobler than myself!
Thou teachest me, O valiant Eros, what
I should, and thou couldst not. My queen and Eros [180
Have by their brave instruction got upon me
A nobleness in record; but I will be
A bridegroom in my death, and run into't
As to a lover's bed. Come, then; and, Eros,
Thy master dies thy scholar: to do thus
I learned of thee. [*Falls on his sword.*]
How! not dead? not dead?—
[*Calling.*] The guard, ho! [190

Enter DERCETAS *and* GUARD.

O, dispatch me!
1 GUARD. What's the noise?
ANT. I have done my work ill, friends: O, make an end
Of what I have begun!
2 GUARD. The star is fall'n.
1 GUARD. And time is at his period.
ALL. Alas, and woe!
ANT. Let him that loves me strike me dead. [201
1 GUARD. Not I!
2 GUARD. Nor I!
3 GUARD. Nor any one! [*Exeunt* GUARD.
DER. Thy death and fortunes bid thy followers fly.
This sword but shown to Cæsar, with this tidings,
Shall enter me with him. [210

Enter DIOMEDES.

DIO. Where's Antony?
DER. There, Diomed, there.
DIO. Lives he? Wilt thou not answer, man? [*Exit* DERCETAS.
ANT. Art thou there, Diomed? Draw thy sword, and give me
Sufficing strokes for death.
DIO. Most absolute lord,
My mistress Cleopatra sent me to thee.
ANT. When did she send thee? [221
DIO. Now, my lord.
ANT. Where is she?
DIO. Locked in her monument. She had a prophesying fear
Of what hath come to pass; for when she saw—
Which never shall be found—you did suspect
She had disposed[17] with Cæsar, and that your rage [231
Would not be purged, she sent you word she was dead;
But, fearing since how it might work, hath sent
Me to proclaim the truth; and I am come,
I dread, too late.
ANT. Too late, good Diomed. Call my guard, I prithee. [240
DIO., *calling.* What, ho! the emperor's guard! The guard, what, ho!
Come, your lord calls!

Enter four or five of the GUARD *of* ANTONY.

ANT. Bear me, good friends, where Cleopatra bides;
'Tis the last service that I shall command you.
1 GUARD. Woe, woe are we, sir, you may not live to wear [251
All your true followers out.
ALL. Most heavy day!
ANT. Nay, good my fellows, do not please sharp fate
To grace it with your sorrows; bid that welcome
Which comes to punish us, and we punish it, [259
Seeming to bear it lightly. Take me up;
I have led you oft; carry me now, good friends,
And have my thanks for all. [*Exeunt, bearing* ANTONY.

SCENE XVI

In the upper part of the monument, CLEOPATRA *has taken refuge with* CHARMIAN *and* IRAS.

CLEO. O Charmian! I will never go from hence.
CHAR. Be comforted, dear madam.

[17] made terms.

CLEO. No, I will not.
All strange and terrible events are welcome,
But comforts we despise; our size of sorrow,
Proportioned to our cause, must be as great
As that which makes it.

Enter, below, DIOMEDES.

How now! is he dead?
DIO. His death's upon him, but [he is] not dead.
Look out o' th' other side your monument;
His guard have brought him thither.

Enter, below, ANTONY, *borne by the* GUARD.

CLEO. O sun!
Burn the great sphere thou mov'st in; darkling stand
The varying star o' th' world. O Antony,
Antony, Antony!—Help, Charmian, help, Iras, help;
Help, friends below! let's draw him hither.
ANT. Peace!
Not Cæsar's valor hath o'erthrown Antony,
But Antony's hath triumphed on itself.
CLEO. So it should be, that none but Antony
Should conquer Antony; but woe 'tis so!
ANT. I am dying, Egypt, dying; only
I here impórtune death awhile, until
Of many thousand kisses the poor last
I lay upon thy lips.
CLEO. I dare not, dear—
Dear my lord, pardon—I dare not,
Lest I be taken: not the imperious show
Of the full-fortuned Cæsar ever shall
Be brooched with me; if knife, drugs, serpents, have
Edge, sting, or operation, I am safe:
Your wife Octavia, with her modest eyes
And still conclusion, shall acquire no honor
Demuring upon me. But come, come, Antony—
Help me, my women—we must draw thee up.—
Assist, good friends.
ANT. O! quick, or I am gone.
CLEO., *with pathetic bitterness.* Here's sport indeed!—How heavy weighs my lord!
Our strength is all gone into heaviness—
That makes the weight. Had I great Juno's power,
The strong-winged Mercury should fetch thee up,
And set thee by Jove's side. Yet come a little,
Wishers were ever fools. O! come, come, come; [*They heave* ANTONY *aloft to* CLEOPATRA.
And welcome, welcome! die where thou hast lived;
Quicken with kissing; had my lips that power,
Thus would I wear them out.
ALL. A heavy sight!
ANT. I am dying, Egypt, dying:
Give me some wine, and let me speak a little.
CLEO. No, let me speak; and let me rail so high,
That the false housewife Fortune break her wheel,
Provoked by my offence.
ANT. One word, sweet queen:
Of Cæsar seek your honor with your safety. O!
CLEO. They do not go together.
ANT. Gentle, hear me:
None about Cæsar trust, but Proculeius.
CLEO. My resolution and my hands I'll trust;
None about Cæsar.
ANT. The miserable change now at my end
Lament nor sorrow at; but please your thoughts
In feeding them with those my former fortunes
Wherein I lived, the greatest prince o' th' world,
The noblest; and do now not basely die,
Not cowardly put off my helmet to
My countryman; a Roman by a Roman

Valiantly vanquished. Now my spirit is going;
I can no more.
CLEO. Noblest of men, woo't die? [109
Hast thou no care of me? shall I abide
In this dull world, which in thy absence is
No better than a sty?—O! see, my women, [ANTONY *dies.*
The crown o' th' earth doth melt.—My lord!—
O! withered is the garland of the war;
The soldier's pole[18] is fall'n; young boys and girls
Are level now with men; the odds is [120
gone,
And there is nothing left remarkable
Beneath the visiting moon. [*Swoons.*
CHAR. O, quietness, lady!
IRAS. She is dead too, our sovereign.
CHAR. Lady!
IRAS. Madam!
CHAR. O madam, madam, madam!
IRAS. Royal Egypt!
Empress! [130
CHAR. Peace, peace, Iras!
CLEO. No more, but e'en a woman, and commanded
By such poor passion as the maid that milks
And does the meanest chares. It were for me
To throw my sceptre at the injurious gods,
To tell them that this world did equal theirs [141
Till they had stol'n our jewel. All's but naught;
Patience is sottish,[19] and impatience does
Become a dog that's mad; then is it sin
To rush into the secret house of death,
Ere death dare come to us?—How do you, women?
What, what! good cheer!—Why, how now, Charmian!— [150
My noble girls! Ah, women, women, look!
Our lamp is spent, it's out. Good sirs, take heart;
We'll bury him; and then, what's brave, what's noble,
Let's do it after the high Roman fashion,
And make death proud to take us.—Come, away;
This case of that huge spirit now is cold.— [161
Ah! women, women. Come; we have no friend
But resolution, and the briefest end.
[*Exeunt; those above bearing off* ANTONY'S *body.*

[18] standard. [19] stupid.

ACT FIVE

SCENE I

In CÆSAR'S *camp,* CÆSAR *is with* AGRIPPA, DOLABELLA, MECÆNAS, GALLUS, PROCULEIUS, *and others. He is eager to have* ANTONY *captive.*

CÆS. Go to him, Dolabella, bid him yield;
Being so frustrate, tell him he mocks
The pauses that he makes.
DOL. Cæsar, I shall. [*Exit.*

Enter DERCETAS, *with the sword of* ANTONY. [11

CÆS. Wherefore is that? and what art thou that dar'st
Appear thus to us?
DER. I am called Dercetas;
Mark Antony I served, who best was worthy
Best to be served; whilst he stood up and spoke,
He was my master, and I wore my life [20
To spend upon his haters. If thou please
To take me to thee, as I was to him
I'll be to Cæsar; if thou pleasest not,
I yield thee up my life.
CÆS. What is't thou sayst?
DER. I say, O Cæsar, Antony is dead.
CÆS. The breaking of so great a thing should make
A greater crack; the round world [30
Should have shook lions into civil streets,
And citizens to their dens. The death of Antony
Is not a single doom; in the name lay
A moi'ty of the world.
DER. He is dead, Cæsar;

Not by a public minister of justice,
Nor by a hirëd knife, but that self hand
Which writ his honor in the acts it did,
Hath, with the courage which the heart did lend it,
Splitted the heart. This is his sword;
I robbed his wound of it; behold it stained
With his most noble blood.
CÆS. Look you sad, friends?
The gods rebuke me, but it is tidings
To wash the eyes of kings.
AGR. And strange it is,
That nature must compel us to lament
Our most persisted deeds.
MEC. His taints and honors
Waged[1] equal with him.
AGR. A rarer spirit never
Did steer humanity; but you, gods, will give us
Some faults to make us men. <Cæsar is touched.
MEC. When such a spacious mirror's set before him,
He needs must see himself.>
CÆS. O Antony!
I have followed thee to this; but we do lance
Diseases in our bodies: I must perforce
Have shown to thee such a declining day,
Or look on thine; we could not stall together
In the whole world. But yet let me lament,
With tears as sovereign as the blood of hearts,
That thou, my brother, my competitor
In top of all design, my mate in empire,
Friend and companion in the front of war,
The arm of mine own body, and the heart
Where mine his thoughts did kindle, that our stars,
Unreconciliable, should divide
Our equalness to this.—Hear me, good friends,—

Enter an EGYPTIAN.

But I will tell you at some meeter season;

[1] Should perhaps be "weighed."

The business of this man looks out of him;
We'll hear him what he says.—Whence are you?
EGYP. A poor Egyptian yet. The queen my mistress,
Confined in all she has, her monument,
Of thy intents desires instructiön,
That she preparëdly may frame herself
To th' way she's forced to.
CÆS. Bid her have good heart;
She soon shall know of us, by some of ours,
How honorable and how kindly we
Determine for her; for Cæsar cannot live
To be ungentle.
EGYP. So the gods preserve thee!
[*Exit.*
CÆS. Come hither, Proculeius. Go and say,
We purpose her no shame; give her what comforts
The quality of her passion shall require,
Lest, in her greatness, by some mortal stroke
She do defeat us; for her life in Rome
Would be eternal in our triumph. Go,
And with your speediest bring us what she says,
And how you find of her.
PRO. Cæsar, I shall. [*Exit.*
CÆS. Gallus, go you along. [*Exit* GALLUS.] Where's Dolabella,
To second Proculeius?
AGR. AND MEC., *calling*. Dolabella!
CÆS. Let him alone, for I remember now
How he's employed; he shall in time be ready.
Go with me to my tent, where you shall see
How hardly I was drawn into this war;
How calm and gentle I proceeded still
In all my writings. Go with me, and see
What I can show in this. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

CLEOPATRA, CHARMIAN, *and* IRAS *are still in the upper part of the monument.*

CLEO. My desolation does begin to make

A better life. 'Tis paltry to be Cæsar;
Not being Fortune, he's but Fortune's knave,
A minister of her will; and it is great
To do that thing that ends all other deeds,
Which shackles accidents and bolts up change,
Which sleeps, and never palates more the dung,
The beggar's nurse and Cæsar's.

Enter, below, PROCULEIUS, GALLUS, *and Soldiers.*

PRO. Cæsar sends greeting to the Queen of Egypt;
And bids thee study on what fair demands
Thou mean'st to have him grant thee.

CLEO. What's thy name?

PRO. My name is Proculeius.

CLEO. Antony
Did tell me of you, bade me trust you; but
I do not greatly care to be deceived,
That have no use for trusting. If your master
Would have a queen his beggar, you must tell him,
That majesty, to keep decorum, must
No less beg than a kingdom: if he please
To give me conquered Egypt for my son,
He gives me so much of mine own as I
Will kneel to him with thanks.

PRO. Be of good cheer;
Y'are fall'n into a princely hand, fear nothing.
Make your full reference freely to my lord,
Who is so full of grace, that it flows over
On all that need; let me report to him
Your sweet dependancy, and you shall find
A conqueror that will pray in aid for kindness
Where he for grace is kneeled to.

CLEO. Pray you, tell him
I am his fortune's vassal, and I send him
The greatness he has got. I hourly learn
A doctrine of obedience, and would gladly
Look him i' th' face.

PRO. This I'll report, dear lady:
Have comfort, for I know your plight is pitied
Of him that caused it.

GAL. <You see how easily she may be surprised.>

PROCULEIUS *and two of the Guard ascend the monument by a ladder, and come behind* CLEOPATRA. *Some of the Guard unbar and open the gates, discovering the lower room of the monument.*

[*To* PROCULEIUS *and the Guard.*] Guard her till Cæsar come. [*Exit.*

IRAS. Royal queen!

CHAR. O Cleopatra! thou art taken, queen!

CLEO. Quick, quick, good hands. [*Drawing a dagger.*

PRO. Hold, worthy lady, hold! [*Seizes and disarms her.*
Do not yourself such wrong, who are in this
Relieved, but not betrayed.

CLEO. What, of death too,
That rids our dogs of languish?

PRO. Cleopatra,
Do not abuse my master's bounty by
Th' undoing of yourself; let the world see
His nobleness well acted, which your death
Will never let come forth.

CLEO. Where art thou, death?
Come hither, come! come, come, and take a queen
Worth many babes and beggars!

PRO. O, temperance, lady!

CLEO. Sir, I will eat no meat; I'll not drink, sir;
If idle talk will once be necessary,
I'll not sleep neither. This mortal house I'll ruin,
Do Cæsar what he can. Know, sir, that I
Will not wait pinioned at your master's court,
Nor once be chástised with the sober eye
Of dull Octavia. Shall they hoist me up
And show me to the shouting varletry
Of censuring Rome? Rather a ditch in Egypt
Be gentle grave unto me! rather on Nilus' mud

Lay me stark naked, and let the water-flies
Blow me into abhorring! rather make
My country's high pyramides my gibbet,
And hang me up in chains!
PRO. You do extend
These thoughts of horror further than you shall
Find cause in Cæsar.

Enter DOLABELLA.

DOL. Proculeius,
What thou hast done thy master Cæsar knows,
And he hath sent for thee; as for the queen,
I'll take her to my guard.
PRO. So, Dolabella,
It shall content me best; be gentle to her.
[*To* CLEOPATRA.] To Cæsar I will speak what you shall please,
If you'll employ me to him.
CLEO. Say, I would die.
[*Exeunt* PROCULEIUS *and Soldiers.*
DOL. Most noble empress, you have heard of me?
CLEO. I cannot tell.
DOL. Assuredly you know me.
CLEO. No matter, sir, what I have heard or known.
You laugh when boys or women tell their dreams;
Is't not your trick?
DOL. I understand not, madam.
CLEO. I dreamed there was an Emperor Antony:
O! such another sleep, that I might see
But such another man.
DOL. If it might please ye—
CLEO. His face was as the heavens, and therein stuck
A sun and moon, which kept their course, and lighted
The little O, the earth.
DOL. Most sovereign creature,—
CLEO. His legs bestrid the ocean; his reared arm
Crested the world; his voice was propertied
As all the tunëd spheres, and that to friends;
But when he meant to quail and shake the orb,
He was as rattling thunder. For his bounty,
There was no winter in't, an autumn 'twas
That grew the more by reaping; his delights
Were dolphin-like, they showed his back above
The element they lived in; in his livery
Walked crowns and crownets, realms and islands were
As plates dropped from his pocket.
DOL. Cleopatra,—
CLEO. Think you there was, or might be such a man
As this I dreamed of?
DOL. Gentle madam, no.
CLEO. You lie, up to the hearing of the gods.
But, if there be, or ever were, one such,
It's past the size of dreaming; nature wants stuff
To vie strange forms with fancy; yet t' imagine
An Antony were nature's piece 'gainst fancy,
Condemning shadows quite.
DOL. Hear me, good madam.
Your loss is as yourself, great; and you bear it
As answering to the weight: would I might never
O'ertake pursued success, but I do feel,
By the rebound of yours, a grief that smites
My very heart at root.
CLEO. I thank you, sir.
Know you what Cæsar means to do with me?
DOL. I am loath to tell you what I would you knew.
CLEO. Nay, pray you, sir.
DOL. Though he be honorable,—
CLEO. He'll lead me, then, in triumph?
DOL. Madam, he will;
I know't.
VOICES, *within*. Make way there!—Cæsar!

Enter Cæsar, Gallus, Proculeius, Mecænas, Seleucus, *and Attendants.*

Cæs. Which is the Queen
Of Egypt?
Dol. It is the emperor, madam.
[Cleopatra *kneels.* [211
Cæs. Arise, you shall not kneel.
I pray you, rise; rise, Egypt.
Cleo. Sir, the gods
Will have it thus; my master and my lord
I must obey.
Cæs. Take to you no hard thoughts;
The record of what injuries you did us,
Though written in our flesh, we shall remember [220
As things but done by chance.
Cleo. Sole sir o' th' world,
I cannot próject mine own cause so well
To make it clear, but do confess I have
Been laden with like frailties which before
Have often shamed our sex.
Cæs. Cleopatra, know,
We will extenuate rather than enforce: [2]
If you apply yourself to our intents—
Which towards you are most gentle—you shall find [232
A benefit in this change; but, if you seek
To lay on me a cruelty, by taking
Antony's course, you shall bereave yourself
Of my good purposes, and put your children
To that destruction which I'll guard them from, [240
If thereon you rely. I'll take my leave.
Cleo. And may, through all the world: 'tis yours; and we,
Your scutcheons, and your signs of conquest, shall
Hang in what place you please. Here, my good lord.
Cæs. You shall advise me in all for Cleopatra.
Cleo., *giving a scroll.* This is the brief of money, plate, and jewels, [251
I am possessed of: 'tis exactly valued;
Not petty things admitted.—Where's Seleucus?
Sel. Here, madam.

[2] accentuate.

Cleo. This is my treasurer; let him speak, my lord,
Upon his peril, that I have reserved
To myself nothing.—Speak the truth, Seleucus. [260
Sel. Madam,
I had rather seal my lips, than, to my peril,
Speak that which is not.
Cleo. What have I kept back?
Sel. Enough to purchase what you have made known.
Cæs. Nay, blush not, Cleopatra; I approve
Your wisdom in the deed. [270
Cleo. See! Cæsar; O, behold,
How pomp is followed; mine will now be yours;
And, should we shift estates, yours would be mine.
The ingratitude of this Seleucus does
Even make me wild.—O slave! of no more trust
Than love that's hired.—What! goest thou back? thou shalt [280
Go back, I warrant thee; but I'll catch thine eyes,
Though they had wings: slave, soulless villain, dog!
O rarely base!
Cæs. Good queen, let us entreat you.
Cleo. O Cæsar! what a wounding shame is this,
That thou, vouchsafing here to visit me,
Doing the honor of thy lordliness [290
To one so meek, that mine own servant should
Parcel the sum of my disgraces by
Addition of his envy.[3] Say, good Cæsar,
That I some lady trifles have reserved,
Immoment[4] toys, things of such dignity
As we greet modern[5] friends withal; and, say
Some nobler token I have kept apart
For Livia and Octavia, to induce [300
Their mediation; must I be unfolded
With one that I have bred? The gods! it smites me
Beneath the fall I have. [*To* Seleucus.] Prithee, go hence,

[3] malice. [4] insignificant. [5] ordinary.

Or I shall show the cinders of my spirits
Through th' ashes of my chance. Wert thou a man,
Thou wouldst have mercy on me.
CÆS. Forbear, Seleucus.
[*Exit* SELEUCUS.
CLEO. Be it known that we, the greatest, are misthought
For things that others do; and, when we fall,
We answer others' merits in our name;
Are therefore to be pitied.
CÆS. Cleopatra,
Not what you have reserved, nor what acknowledged,
Put we i' th' roll of conquest: still be 't yours;
Bestow it at your pleasure; and believe
Cæsar's no merchant, to make prize with you
Of things that merchants sold. Therefore be cheered;
Make not your thoughts your prisons: no, dear queen;
For we intend so to dispose you as
Yourself shall give us counsel. Feed, and sleep:
Our care and pity is so much upon you
That we remain your friend; and so, adieu.
CLEO. My master, and my lord!
CÆS. Not so. Adieu!
[*Flourish. Exeunt* CÆSAR *and his Train.*
CLEO. He words me, girls, he words me, that I should not
Be noble to myself—but, hark thee, Charmian. [*Whispers* CHARMIAN.
IRAS. Finish, good lady; the bright day is done,
And we are for the dark.
CLEO. Hie thee again:
I have spoke already, and it is provided;
Go, put it to the haste.
CHAR. Madam, I will.

Re-enter DOLABELLA.

DOL. Where is the queen?
CHAR. Behold, sir. [*Exit.*
CLEO. Dolabella!
DOL. Madam, as thereto sworn by your command,
Which my love makes religion to obey,
I tell you this: Cæsar through Syria
Intends his journey; and within three days
You with your children will he send before.
Make your best use of this; I have performed
Your pleasure and my promise.
CLEO. Dolabella,
I shall remain your debtor.
DOL. I your servant.
Adieu, good queen; I must attend on Cæsar.
CLEO. Farewell, and thanks. [*Exit* DOLABELLA.] Now, Iras, what think'st thou?
Thou, an Egyptian puppet, shall be shown
In Rome, as well as I; mechanic slaves
With greasy aprons, rules and hammers, shall
Uplift us to the view; in their thick breaths,
Rank of gross diet, shall we be enclouded,
And forced to drink their vapor.
IRAS. The gods forbid!
CLEO. Nay, 'tis most certain, Iras. Saucy lictors
Will catch at us, like strumpets, and scald rimers
Ballad us out o' tune; the quick comedians
Extemporally will stage us, and present
Our Alexandrian revels. Antony
Shall be brought drunken forth, and I shall see
Some squeaking Cleopatra boy my greatness
I' th' posture of a whore.
IRAS. O, the good gods!
CLEO. Nay, that's certain.
IRAS. I'll never see it; for I am sure my nails
Are stronger than mine eyes.
CLEO. Why, that's the way
To fool their preparation, and to conquer
Their most absurd intents.

Re-enter CHARMIAN.

Now, Charmian!—

Show me, my women, like a queen; go fetch
My best attires; I am again for Cydnus,
To meet Mark Antony.—Sirrah Iras, go.—
Now, noble Charmian, we'll dispatch indeed;
And, when thou hast done this chare, I'll give thee leave
To play—till doomsday.—Bring our crown and all. [*Exit* Iras. *A noise heard.*
Wherefore's this noise?

Enter one of the Guard.

Guard. Here is a rural fellow
That will not be denied your highness' presence:
He brings you figs.

Cleo. Let him come in. [*Exit* Guard. What poor an instrument
May do a noble deed! he brings me liberty.
My resolution's placed, and I have nothing
Of woman in me; now from head to foot
I am marble-constant, now the fleeting moon
No planet is of mine.

Re-enter Guard, *with a* Clown *bringing in a basket.*

Guard. This is the man.

Cleo. Avoid, and leave him. [*Exit* Guard.
Hast thou the pretty worm[6] of Nilus there,
That kills and pains not?

Clo. Truly, I have him; but I would not be the party that should desire you to touch him, for his biting is immortal; those that do die of it do seldom or never recover.

Cleo. Remember'st thou any that have died on't?

Clo. Very many, men and women too. I heard of one of them no longer than yesterday; a very honest woman, but something given to lie, as a woman should not do but in the way of honesty, how she died of the biting of it, what pain she felt. Truly, she makes a very good report o' th' worm; but he that will believe all that they say shall never be saved by half that they do. But this is most falliable, the worm's an odd worm.

Cleo. Get thee hence; farewell.

Clo. I wish you all joy of the worm. [*Sets down the basket.*

Cleo. Farewell!

Clo. You must think this, look you, that the worm will do his kind.

Cleo. Ay, ay; farewell!

Clo. Look you, the worm is not to be trusted but in the keeping of wise people; for indeed there is no goodness in the worm.

Cleo. Take thou no care; it shall be heeded.

Clo. Very good. Give it nothing, I pray you, for it is not worth the feeding.

Cleo. Will it eat me?

Clo. You must not think I am so simple but I know the devil himself will not eat a woman; I know that a woman is a dish for the gods; if the devil dress her not. But, truly, these same whoreson devils do the gods great harm in their women, for, in every ten that they make, the devils mar five.

Cleo. Well, get thee gone; farewell.

Clo. Yes, forsooth; I wish you joy of the worm. [*Exit.*

Re-enter Iras, *with a robe, crown, &c.*

Cleo. Give me my robe, put on my crown; I have
Immortal longings in me; now no more
The juice of Egypt's grape shall moist this lip.
Yare, yare, good Iras; quick. Methinks I hear
Antony call; I see him rouse himself
To praise my noble act; I hear him mock
The luck of Cæsar, which the gods give men
To excuse their after wrath.—Husband, I come
Now to that name my courage prove my title! [Iras *brings forth an asp, and puts it on her breast.*

[6] serpent.

I am fire, and air; my other elements
I give to baser life.—So; have you done?
Come then, and take the last warmth of my lips.
Farewell, kind Charmian. Iras, long farewell. [*Kisses them.* IRAS *falls and dies.* [510
Have I the aspic in my lips? Dost fall?
If thou and nature can so gently part,
The stroke of death is as a lover's pinch,
Which hurts, and is desired. Dost thou lie still?
If thus thou vanishest, thou tell'st the world
It is not worth leave-taking.
CHAR. Dissolve, thick cloud, and rain; that I may say, [520
The gods themselves do weep.
CLEO. This proves me base:
If she first meet the curlëd Antony,
He'll make demand of her, and spend that kiss
Which is my heaven to have.—Come, thou mortal wretch, [*To the asp, which she applies to her breast.*
With thy sharp teeth this knot intrinsicate [530
Of life at once untie; poor venomous fool,
Be angry, and dispatch. O! couldst thou speak,
That I might hear thee call great Cæsar ass
Unpolicied.
CHAR. O eastern star!
CLEO. Peace, peace!
Dost thou not see my baby at my breast,
That sucks the nurse asleep? [541
CHAR. O, break! O, break!
CLEO. As sweet as balm, as soft as air, as gentle!—
O Antony!—Nay, I will take thee too.
[*Applying the other asp to her arm.*
What should I stay— [*Dies.*
CHAR. In this vild world? So, fare thee well.—
Now boast thee, death, in thy possession lies [551
A lass unparalleled.—Downy windows, close;
And golden Phœbus never be beheld
Of eyes again so royal!—Your crown's awry;
I'll mend it, and then play.

Enter the GUARD, *rushing in.*

1 GUARD. Where is the queen?
CHAR. Speak softly, wake her not.
1 GUARD. Cæsar hath sent— [561
CHAR. Too slow a messenger.
[*Takes one of the asps, and places it on her breast.*
O! come apace, dispatch; I partly feel thee.
1 GUARD. Approach, ho! All's not well; Cæsar's beguiled.
2 GUARD. There's Dolabella, sent from Cæsar; call him. [570
1 GUARD. What work is here!—Charmian, is this well done?
CHAR. It is well done, and fitting for a princess
Descended of so many royal kings.
Ah! soldier. [*Dies.*

Re-enter DOLABELLA.

DOL. How goes it here?
2 GUARD. All dead.
DOL. Cæsar, thy thoughts
Touch their effects in this; thyself art coming [582
To see performed the dreaded act which thou
So sought'st to hinder.
VOICES, *within.* A way there.—A way for Cæsar!

Re-enter CÆSAR *and all his Train.*

DOL. O! sir, you are too sure an augurer; [590
That you did fear is done.
CÆS. Bravest at the last,
She levelled at our purposes, and, being royal,
Took her own way.—The manner of their deaths?
I do not see them bleed.
DOL. Who was last with them?
1 GUARD. A simple countryman that brought her figs: [600
This was his basket.
CÆS. Poisoned then.

1 Guard. O Cæsar!
This Charmian lived but now; she stood, and spake:
I found her trimming up the diadem
On her dead mistress; tremblingly she stood,
And on the sudden dropped.
Cæs. O noble weakness!
If they had swallowed poison 'twould appear [612
By external swelling; but she looks like sleep,
As she would catch another Antony
In her strong toil of grace.
Dol. Here, on her breast,
There is a vent of blood, and something blown;
The like is on her arm. [620
1 Guard. This is an aspic's trail; and these fig-leaves
Have slime upon them, such as the aspic leaves
Upon the caves of Nile.
Cæs. Most probable
That so she died; for her physician tells me
She hath pursued conclusions[7] infinite
Of easy ways to die.—Take up her bed;
And bear her women from the monument. [632
She shall be buried by her Antony:
No grave upon the earth shall clip in it
A pair so famous. High events as these
Strike those that make them; and their story is
No less in pity than his glory which
Brought them to be lamented. Our army shall, [640
In solemn show, attend this funeral,
And then to Rome.—Come, Dolabella, see
High order in this great solemnity.
[*Exeunt.*

[7] experiments.

PHILASTER

BY

FRANCIS BEAUMONT

AND

JOHN FLETCHER

INTRODUCTION

The play which is credited with having given Beaumont and Fletcher their first success and established a new vogue in drama is not merely of great historical importance: it is also, despite obvious faults and deficiencies, a very moving and interesting piece of work. Its date of production is by no means certain; the likeliest year is 1609, and that can, in any case, scarcely be more than a year out. It was acted at Court 1612–3, and was almost certainly revised for the occasion. There were eight quarto editions of the play in the seventeenth century; and it was also included in the folio of 1679. The first two quartos, those of 1620 and 1622, give different versions of the play, the second being described, warrantably, as "purged of the gross errors" of the earlier one. Both versions claim to be the work of Beaumont and Fletcher; but there is certainly in the first quarto work that is not to be set down to the discredit of either. It is not a matter of mere corruptness of the text: it is a distinct version, with a different beginning and ending. Though there is assuredly another hand to be seen here, it is to be noted that part of the final scene not included in any of the later quartos or the folio is distinctly the work of Fletcher. The unknown third author's work is of little value, and finds no place here, as it found no place in the authorized version. The play, as it stands, is preponderantly Beaumont's.

People of romantic and sentimental inclinations will find the play one of the most beautiful in the collection; those of a practical or cynical cast of mind will be over-conscious of its absurdities. To such, Arethusa's haughty inquiry of the country-fellow who endeavors to save her from murder by her princely lover—

> What ill-bred man art thou, to intrude thyself
> Upon our private sports, our recreations?

must be peculiarly appealing. But the defects are not merely such as are created by an ultra-aristocratic, ultra-romantic, ultra-sentimental outlook: there are also serious faults of characterization—faults in both the conception and the portrayal of some of the principal persons of the drama. Dion prates a lot, but seems to be entirely dependent on others for the action he desires, and, when he does act, acts with

incredible baseness. With Arethusa a false note is struck, when she is made to reply to the King's inquiry as to who attends her:

> None but my single self; I need no guard;
> I do no wrong, nor fear none.

It almost seems as if in her asseveration of righteousness she condemns herself. But this is only a small matter; and Dion is only a small character, despite the amount of talking he does; it is Philaster who constitutes the blot on the play from the point of view of characterization. We are intended to sympathize with him, to regard him as a pattern of nobility and valor; and, instead, we cannot help feeling for him a considerable measure of contempt. In the opening scene he exhibits a strange admixture of proud defiance and pitiful cringing, and the reader is led to expect a man of somewhat Hamlet-like nature. He promises to be a psychological study, but drifts into an impossibility. It is in the fourth act that his moral character goes to pieces. His degradation is extreme when he wounds his faithful boy, in order to cast upon him suspicion for his own crime. After that, we are scarcely surprised at his creeping into the bush to hide, instead of facing his pursuers. He is full of good impulses, it is true; but one cannot forget or forgive his despicable actions; nor can one reconcile his occasional courage with his less occasional cowardice, or tolerate this man of royal blood speaking of himself as "poor Philaster." His assumption of both virtue and modesty (III 1) is irritating. He is, in fact, a well-meaning, but contemptible prig.

With such a handicap as a hero who can scarcely escape our contempt, wherein consists the merit of this play? The question is easily answered. It contains long passages of the greatest beauty and pathos, over-sentimental undoubtedly, but sweeping one away by their sheer loveliness and delicacy. There are places where Beaumont's verse is almost Shakespearean both in style and in quality, and other places where it has a quality of its own, a tenderness, an exquisiteness, that are peculiarly his, and that no one—not even Shakespeare—has ever surpassed. Turn to II 1; to II 3; to the final scene, with Euphrasia's incomparably beautiful story of how she had come to be Bellario; to III 1, with that lovely passage in which Bellario tells what it is to die:

> 'Tis less than to be born; a lasting sleep;
> A quiet resting from all jealousy;
> A thing we all pursue. I know besides
> It is but giving over of a game
> That must be lost.

It does not need many passages such as that to make one overlook even greater faults than those that mar this drama of too high-pitched senti-

ment, where the devotion of the two principal women is self-sacrificing and doglike. The virtues of these people are out of fashion to-day. And, in conclusion, let a line or two be given to the fine vigor of the Fletcher portion of the drama, and to the strong characterization of the undelectable Megra, of whom Cleremont not unfittingly says, "Here's a male spirit fit for Hercules."

CHARACTERS

The King of Sicily *and* Calabria.
Philaster, *the rightful Heir to the Crown of Sicily.*
Pharamond, *Prince of Spain.*
Dion, *a Lord.*
Cleremont, Thrasiline } *Noble Gentlemen, his friends.*
An Old Captain.
A Country Fellow.

Arethusa, *Daughter of the King.*
Bellario, *Philaster's page, really* Euphrasia, *daughter of Dion.*
Megra, *a Court Lady.*
Galatea, *a Lady attending the Princess.*
Two Other Ladies.
Woodmen, Guards, Attendants, Citizens, Messengers.

Place: *Sicily.*
Time: *Indefinite.*

PHILASTER; OR, LOVE LIES A-BLEEDING

ACT ONE

Scene I (B. F.)[1]

The King *of* Sicily *is a usurper. The rightful heir,* Philaster, *is kept at Court because the* King *is too apprehensive of the popular affection for him to make away with him. His only daughter,* Arethusa, *he has betrothed to the Spanish prince,* Pharamond, *believing that, with the power of Spain behind him, he will be the better able to keep his rebellious subjects quiet.* [10

Dion, Cleremont, *and* Thrasiline *meet in the presence chamber of the palace.*

Cler. Here's nor lords nor ladies.

Dion. Credit me, gentlemen, I wonder at it. They received strict charge from the King to attend here: besides, it was boldly published, that no officer should forbid any gentleman that desired to attend and hear. [20

Cler. Can you guess the cause?

Dion. Sir, it is plain: about the Spanish Prince, that's come to marry our kingdom's heir and be our sovereign.

Thra. Many that will seem to know much say she looks not on him like a maid in love.

Dion. O, sir, the multitude, that seldom know anything but their own opinions, speak that they would have; but the [30 prince, before his own approach, received so many confident messages from the state that I think she's resolved to be ruled.

Cler. Sir, it is thought, with her he shall enjoy both these kingdoms of Sicily and Calabria.

Dion. Sir, it is without controversy so meant. But 'twill be a troublesome labor for him to enjoy both these king- [40 doms with safety, the right heir to one of them living, and living so virtuously; especially, the people admiring the bravery of his mind and lamenting his injuries.

Cler. Who? Philaster?

Dion. Yes; whose father, we all know, was by our late King of Calabria unrighteously deposed from his fruitful Sicily. Myself drew some blood in those wars, which I would give my hand to be washed from. [51

Cler. Sir, my ignorance in state-policy will not let me know why, Philaster being heir to one of these kingdoms, the King should suffer him to walk abroad with such free liberty.

Dion. Sir, it seems your nature is more constant than to inquire after state-news. But the King, of late, made a hazard of both the kingdoms, of Sicily [60 and his own, with offering but to imprison Philaster; at which the city was in arms, not to be charmed down by any state-order or proclamation, till they saw Philaster ride through the streets pleased and without a guard; at which they threw their hats and their arms from them; some to make bonfires, some to drink, all for his deliverance: which wise men say is the cause the King labors to bring [70 in the power of a foreign nation, to awe his own with.

Enter Galatea, *an unnamed* Lady, *and* Megra.

Thra. See, the ladies! What's the first?

Dion. A wise and modest gentlewoman that attends the princess.

Cler. The second? [79

[1] The beginning is Beaumont's. Fletcher's portion begins with the commencement of Pharamond's long speech.

DION. She is one that may stand still discreetly enough, and ill-favoredly dance her measure; simper when she is courted by her friend, and slight her husband.

CLER. The last?

DION. Marry, I think she is one whom the state keeps for the agents of our confederate princes; she'll cog[2] and lie with a whole army, before the league shall break. Her name is common through the kingdom, and the trophies of her dis- [90
honor advanced beyond Hercules' Pillars. She loves to try the several constitutions of men's bodies; and, indeed, has destroyed the worth of her own body by making experiment upon it for the good of the commonwealth.

CLER. She's a profitable member. [*The men talk apart.*

MEG. Peace, if you love me: you shall see these gentlemen stand their ground and not court us. [101

GAL. What if they should?

LADY, *scornfully*. What if they should!

MEG. Nay, let her alone.—What if they should? Why, if they should, I say they were never abroad: what foreigner would do so? it writes them directly untravelled.

GAL. Why, what if they be?

LADY. What if they be! [110

MEG. Good madam, let her go on.—What if they be? why, if they be, I will justify, they cannot maintain discourse with a judicious lady, nor make a leg,[3] nor say "excuse me."

GAL. Ha, ha, ha!

MEG. Do you laugh, madam?

DION, *coming forward*. Your desires upon you, ladies!

MEG. Then you must sit beside us. [120

DION. I shall sit near you then, lady.

MEG. Near me, perhaps: but there's a lady endures no stranger; and to me you appear a very strange fellow.

LADY. Methinks he's not so strange; he would quickly be acquainted.

THRA. Peace, the King!

Enter the KING, PHARAMOND, ARETHUSA, *and Attendants.*

KING. To give a stronger testimony of love [131
Than sickly promises (which commonly
In princes find both birth and burial
In one breath), we have drawn you, worthy sir,
To make your fair endearments to our daughter,
And worthy services known to our subjects,
Now loved and wondered at; next, our intent [141
To plant you deeply our immediate heir
Both to our blood and kingdoms. For this lady
(The best part of your life, as you confirm me,
And I believe), though her few years and sex
Yet teach her nothing but her fears and blushes, [150
Desires without desire, discourse and knowledge
Only of what herself is to herself,
Make her feel moderate health, and, when she sleeps,
In making no ill day, knows no ill dreams:
Think not, dear sir, these undivided parts, [159
That must mould up a virgin, are put on
To show her so, as borrowed ornaments,
To speak her perfect love to you or add
An artificial shadow to her nature.
No, sir;
I boldly dare proclaim her yet no woman.
But woo her still, and think her modesty
A sweeter mistress than the offered language
Of any dame, were she a queen, whose eye [170
Speaks common loves and comforts to her servants.[4]
Last, noble son (for so I now must call you),
What I have done thus public is not only
To add a comfort in particular
To you or me, but all, and to confirm
The nobles and the gentry of these kingdoms

[2] cheat. [3] make an obeisance. [4] suitors.

By oath to your succession, which shall be [181
Within this month at most.
THRA., *to* CLEREMONT *and* DION. <This will be hardly done.
CLER. It must be ill done, if it be done.
DION. When 'tis at best, 'twill be but half done, whilst
So brave a gentleman is wronged and flung off.
THRA. I fear. [190
CLER. Who does not?
DION. I fear not for myself, and yet I fear too:
Well, we shall see, we shall see. No more.>
PHAR. Kissing your white hand, mistress, I take leave
To thank your royal father, and thus far
To be my own free trumpet.—Understand, [200
Great King, and these your subjects, mine that must be
(For so deserving you have spoke me, sir,
And so deserving I dare speak myself),
To what a person, of what eminence,
Ripe expectation, of what faculties,
Manners, and virtues, you would wed your kingdoms;
You in me have your wishes. Oh, this country! [211
By more than all the gods, I hold it happy;
Happy in their dear memories that have been
Kings great and good; happy in yours that is;
And from you (as a chronicle to keep
Your noble name from eating age) do I
Opine myself most happy. Gentlemen,
Believe me in a word, a prince's word, [221
There shall be nothing to make up a kingdom
Mighty and flourishing, defencëd, feared,
Equal to be commanded and obeyed,
But through the travails of my life I'll find it,
And tie it to this country. By all the gods, [229
My reign shall be so easy to the subject
That every man shall be his prince himself
And his own law—yet I his prince and law.—
And, dearest lady, to your dearest self
(Dear in the choice of him whose name and lustre
Must make you more and mightier) let me say, [239
You are the blessed'st living; for, sweet princess,
You shall enjoy a man of men to be
Your servant; you shall make him yours, for whom
Great queens must die.
THRA. <Miraculous!
CLER. This speech
Calls him Spaniard, being nothing but a large [249
Inventory of his own commendations.
DION. I wonder what's his price; for certainly
He'll sell himself, he has so praised his shape.
But here comes one more worthy those large speeches

Enter PHILASTER.

Than the large speaker of them. [258
Let me be swallowed quick, if I can find,
In all the anatomy of yon man's[5] virtues,
One sinew sound enough to promise for him,
He shall be constable. By this sun, he'll ne'er make king
Unless it be of trifles, in my poor judgment.>
PHIL., *kneeling to the* KING. Right noble sir, as low as my obedience,
And with a heart as loyal as my knee,
I beg your favor. [270
KING. Rise; you have it, sir.
[PHILASTER *rises.*
DION. <Mark but the King, how pale he looks: he fears!
Oh, this same whoreson conscience, how it jades us!>
KING. Speak your intents, sir.
PHIL. Shall I speak 'em freely?
Be still my royal sovereign.
KING. As a subject, [280

[5] He is again referring to Pharamond.

We give you freedom.
DION. <Now it heats.>
PHIL. Then thus I turn
My language to you, prince; you foreign man!
Ne'er stare nor put on wonder, for you must
Endure me, and you shall. This earth you tread upon
(A dowry, as you hope, with this fair princess),
By my dead father (oh, I had a father,
Whose memory I bow to) was not left
To your inheritance, and I up and living,
Having myself about me and my sword,
The souls of all my name and memories,
These arms, and some few friends, beside the gods,
To part so calmly with it, and sit still
And say, "I might have been." I tell thee, Pharamond,
When thou art king, look I be dead and rotten,
And my name ashes: for, hear me, Pharamond!
This very ground thou goest on, this fat earth
My father's friends made fertile with their faiths,
Before that day of shame, shall gape and swallow
Thee and thy nation, like a hungry grave,
Into her hidden bowels; prince, it shall;
By the just gods, it shall!
PHAR. He's mad; beyond cure, mad.
DION. <Here is a fellow has some fire in's veins:
The outlandish prince looks like a tooth-drawer.>
PHIL. Sir prince of popinjays, I'll make it well
Appear to you I am not mad.
KING. You displease us:
You are too bold.
PHIL. No, sir, I am too tame,
Too much a turtle, a thing born without passion,
A faint shadow, that every drunken cloud
Sails over and makes nothing.
KING. I do not fancy this.
Call our physicians: sure he's somewhat tainted.
THRA., *to* DION *and* CLEREMONT. <I do not think 'twill prove so.
DION. H'as given him a general purge already,
For all the right he has; and now he means
To let him blood. Be constant, gentlemen:
By heaven, I'll run his hazard,
Although I run my name out of the kingdom!
CLER. Peace, we are all one soul.>
PHAR. What you have seen in me to stir offence,
I cannot find, unless it be this lady,
Offered into mine arms with the succession;
Which I must keep (though it hath pleased your fury
To mutiny within you), without disputing
Your genealogies, or taking knowledge
Whose branch you are: the King will leave it me,
And I dare make it mine. You have your answer.
PHIL. If thou wert sole inheritor to him
That made the world his, and couldst see no sun
Shine upon anything but thine; were Pharamond
As truly valiant as I feel him cold,
And ringed among the choicest of his friends
(Such as would blush to talk such serious follies,
Or back such bellied commendatiöns),
And from this presence, spite of all these bugs,[6]
You should hear further from me.
KING. Sir,
You wrong the prince; I gave you not this freedom
To brave our best friends: you deserve our frown.
Go to; be better tempered.
PHIL. It must be, sir,

[6] affrightments.

When I am nobler used.
GAL. <Ladies,
This would have been a pattern of succession,
Had he ne'er met this mischief. By my life,
He is the worthiest the true name of man
This day within my knowledge.
MEG. I cannot tell what you may call your knowledge;
But the other is the man set in mine eye:
Oh, 'tis a prince of wax!
GAL. A dog it is.>
KING. Philaster, tell me
The injuries you aim at in your riddles.
PHIL. If you had my eyes, sir, and sufferance,
My griefs upon you, and my broken fortunes,
My wants great, and now naught but hopes and fears,
My wrongs would make ill riddles to be laughed at.
Dare you be still my king, and right me not?
KING. Give me your wrongs in private.
PHIL. Take them,
And ease me of a load would bow strong Atlas. [*They talk apart.*
CLER. <He dares not stand the shock.
DION. I cannot blame him; there's danger in't. Every man in this age has not a soul of crystal, for all men to read their actions through: men's hearts and faces are so far asunder that they hold no intelligence. Do but view yon stranger well, and you shall see a fever through all his bravery, and feel him shake like a true tenant:[7] if he give not back his crown again upon the report of an elder-gun,[8] I have no augury.>
KING. Go to;
Be more yourself, as you respect our favor;
You'll stir us else. Sir, I must have you know,
That y'are, and shall be, at our pleasure, what
Fashion we will put upon you. Smooth your brow,
Or, by the gods—
PHIL. I am dead, sir; y'are my fate. It was not I
Said I was wronged: I carry all about me
My weak stars lead me to, all my weak fortunes.
Who dares in all this presence speak (that is
But man of flesh, and may be mortal), tell me
I do not most entirely love this prince
And honor his full virtues!
KING. Sure he's possessed!
PHIL. Yes, with my father's spirit. It's here, O King,
A dangerous spirit! now he tells me, King,
I was a king's heir, bids me be a king,
And whispers to me, these are all my subjects.
'Tis strange he will not let me sleep, but dives
Into my fancy, and there gives me shapes
That kneel and do me service, cry me king.
But I'll suppress him; he's a factious spirit,
And will undo me. Noble sir, your hand;
I am your servant.
KING. Away! I do not like this:
I'll make you tamer, or I'll dispossess you
Both of your life and spirit. For this time
I pardon your wild speech, without so much
As your imprisonment. [*Exeunt* KING, PHARAMOND, ARETHUSA, *and Attendants.*
DION. <I thank you, sir! you dare not, for the people.>
GAL. Ladies, what think you now of this brave fellow?
MEG. A pretty talking fellow, hot at hand. But eye yon stranger: is he not a fine complete gentleman? Oh, these strangers, I do affect them strangely! they do the rarest home-things, and please the fullest! As I live, I could love all the nation over and over for his sake.

[7] not like a real possessor.
[8] a pop-gun.

GAL. Gods comfort your poor head-piece, lady! 'tis a weak one, and had need of a night-cap. [*Exeunt* GALATEA, MEGRA, *and* LADY.

DION., *to* CLEREMONT *and* THRASILINE. <See, how his fancy labors. Has he not
Spoke home and bravely? what a dangerous train [490
Did he give fire to! how he shook the King,
Made his soul melt within him, and his blood
Run into whey! it stood upon his brow
Like a cold winter-dew.>

PHIL. Gentlemen,
You have no suit to me? I am no minion:
You stand, methinks, like men that would be courtiers, [501
If I could well be flattered at a price,
Not to undo your children. You're all honest:
Go, get you home again, and make your country
A virtuous court, to which your great ones may,
In their diseased age, retire and live recluse. [510

CLER. How do you, worthy sir?

PHIL. Well, very well;
And so well that, if the King please, I find
I may live many years.

DION. The King must please,
Whilst we know what you are and who you are,
Your wrongs and virtues. Shrink not, worthy sir, [520
But add your father to you; in whose name
We'll waken all the gods, and conjure up
The rods of vengeance, the abusëd people,
Who, like to raging torrents, shall swell high,
And so begirt the dens of these male dragons,
That, through the strongest safety, they shall beg [530
For mercy at your sword's point.

PHIL. Friends, no more;
Our ears may be corrupted; 'tis an age
We dare not trust our wills to. Do you love me?

THRA. Do we love Heaven and honor?

PHIL. My Lord Dion, you had
A virtuous gentlewoman called you father;
Is she yet alive? [540

DION. Most honored sir, she is;
And, for the penance but of an idle dream,
Has undertook a tedious pilgrimage.

Enter a LADY.[9]

PHIL. Is it to me,
Or any of these gentlemen, you come?

LADY. To you, brave lord; the princess would entreat
Your present company. [550

PHIL. The princess send for me! you are mistaken.

LADY. If you be called Philaster, 'tis to you.

PHIL. Kiss her fair hand, and say I will attend her. [*Exit* LADY.

DION. Do you know what you do?

PHIL. Yes; go to see a woman.

CLER. But do you weigh the danger you are in? [560

PHIL. Danger in a sweet face!
By Jupiter, I must not fear a woman!

THRAS. But are you sure it was the princess sent?
It may be some foul train to catch your life.

PHIL. I do not think it, gentlemen; she's noble.
Her eye may shoot me dead, or those true red [570
And white friends in her cheeks may steal my soul out;
There's all the danger in't: but, be what may,
Her single name hath armëd me. [*Exit.*

DION. Go on,
And be as truly happy as thou'rt fearless!—
Come, gentlemen, let's make our friends acquainted, [580
Lest the King prove false. [*Exeunt.*

[9] Who may or may not be identical with the previously introduced unnamed Lady.

Scene II (B)

A few minutes later the Princess Arethusa *is in her apartment, awaiting* Philaster. *The* Lady *who took the message to* Philaster *is with her. There are two doors, one leading to an inner room, the other to an ante-chamber. The* Princess *loses no time in letting us see that she is deep in love with* Philaster.

Are. Comes he not?
Lady. Madam?
Are. Will Philaster come?
Lady. Dear madam, you were wont to credit me
At first.
Are. But didst thou tell me so?
I am forgetful, and my woman's strength
Is so o'ercharged with dangers like to grow
About my marriage that these underthings
Dare not abide in such a troubled sea.
How looked he when he told thee he would come?
Lady. Why, well.
Are. And not a little fearful?
Lady. Fear, madam? sure, he knows not what it is.
Are. You all are of his faction; the whole court
Is bold in praise of him; whilst I
May live neglected and do noble things,
As fools in strife throw gold into the sea,
Drowned in the doing. But I know he fears.
Lady. Fear, madam? methought his looks hid more
Of love than fear.
Are. Of love? to whom? to you?
Did you deliver those plain words I sent,
With such a winning gesture and quick look
That you have caught him?
Lady. Madam, I mean to you.
Are. Of love to me? alas, thy ignorance
Lets thee not see the crosses of our births!
Nature, that loves not to be questionëd
Why she did this or that, but has her ends
And knows she does well, never gave the world
Two things so opposite, so contrary,
As he and I am: if a bowl of blood,
Drawn from this arm of mine, would poison thee,
A draught of his would cure thee. Of love to me!
Lady. Madam, I think I hear him.
Are. Bring him in.—[*Exit* Lady.
You gods, that would not have your dooms withstood,
Whose holy wisdoms at this time it is
To make the passion of a feeble maid
The way unto your justice, I obey.

Re-enter Lady *with* Philaster.

Lady. Here is my Lord Philaster.
Are. Oh, 'tis well.
Withdraw yourself. [*Exit* Lady.
Phil. Madam, your messenger
Made me believe you wished to speak with me.
Are. 'Tis true, Philaster; but the words are such
I have to say, and do so ill beseem
The mouth of woman, that I wish them said,
And yet am loath to speak them. Have you known
That I have aught detracted from your worth?
Have I in person wronged you? or have set
My baser instruments to throw disgrace
Upon your virtues?
Phil. Never, madam, you.
Are. Why, then, should you, in such a public place,
Injure a princess, and a scandal lay
Upon my fortunes, famed to be so great,
Calling a great part of my dowry in question?
Phil. Madam, this truth which I shall speak will be
Foolish: but, for your fair and virtuous self,
I could afford myself to have no right
To anything you wished.
Are. Philaster, know,
I must enjoy these kingdoms.

PHIL. Madam, both?
ARE. Both, or I die: by heaven, I die, Philaster,
If I not calmly may enjoy them both.
PHIL. I would do much to save that noble life,
Yet would be loath to have posterity
Find in our stories, that Philaster gave
His right unto a sceptre and a crown
To save a lady's longing.
ARE. Nay, then, hear:
I must and will have them, and more—
PHIL. What more?
ARE. Or lose that little life the gods prepared
To trouble this poor piece of earth withal.
PHIL. Madam, what more?
ARE. Turn, then, away thy face.
PHIL. No.
ARE. Do.
PHIL. I can endure it. Turn away my face!
I never yet saw enemy that looked
So dreadfully but that I thought myself
As great a basilisk as he, or spake
So horrible but that I thought my tongue
Bore thunder underneath as much as his;
Nor beast that I could turn from: shall I then
Begin to fear sweet sounds? a lady's voice,
Whom I do love? Say you would have my life;
Why, I will give it you; for it is of me
A thing so loathed, and unto you that ask
Of so poor use, that I shall make no price:
If you entreat, I will unmov'dly hear.
ARE. Yet, for my sake, a little bend thy looks.
PHIL. I do.
ARE. Then know, I must have them and thee.
PHIL. And me?
ARE. Thy love; without which, all the land
Discovered yet will serve me for no use
But to be buried in.
PHIL. Is't possible?
ARE. With it, it were too little to bestow
On thee. Now, though thy breath do strike me dead
(Which, know, it may), I have unripped my breast.
PHIL. Madam, you are too full of noble thoughts,
To lay a train for this contemnëd life,
Which you may have for asking: to suspect
Were base, where I deserve no ill. Love you!
By all my hopes, I do, above my life!
But how this passion should proceed from you
So violently would amaze a man
That would be jealous.
ARE. Another soul into my body shot
Could not have filled me with more strength and spirit
Than this thy breath. But spend not hasty time
In seeking how I came thus: 'tis the gods,
The gods, that make me so; and, sure, our love
Will be the nobler and the better blest,
In that the secret justice of the gods
Is mingled with it. Let us leave, and kiss;
Lest some unwelcome guest should fall betwixt us.
And we should part without it.
PHIL. 'Twill be ill
I should abide here long.
ARE. 'Tis true; and worse
You should come often. How shall we devise
To hold intelligence, that our true loves,
On any new occasion, may agree
What path is best to tread?
PHIL. I have a boy,
Sent by the gods, I hope, to this intent,
Not yet seen in the court. Hunting the buck,
I found him sitting by a fountain's side,
Of which he borrowed some to quench his thirst,
And paid the nymph again as much in tears.
A garland lay him by, made by himself

Of many several flowers bred in the vale,
Stuck in that mystic order that the rareness
Delighted me: but ever when he turned
His tender eyes upon 'em, he would weep,
As if he meant to make 'em grow again.
Seeing such pretty helpless innocence
Dwell in his face, I asked him all his story:
He told me that his parents gentle died,
Leaving him to the mercy of the fields,
Which gave him roots; and of the crystal springs,
Which did not stop their courses; and the sun,
Which still, he thanked him, yielded him his light.
Then took he up his garland, and did show
What every flower, as country-people hold,
Did signify, and how all, ordered thus,
Expressed his grief; and, to my thoughts, did read
The prettiest lecture of his country art
That could be wished: so that methought I could
Have studied it. I gladly entertained
Him, who was glad to follow; and have got
The trustiest, loving'st, and the gentlest boy
That ever master kept. Him will I send
To wait on you, and bear our hidden love.

Re-enter LADY.

ARE. 'Tis well; no more.
LADY. Madam, the prince is come to do his service.
ARE. What will you do, Philaster, with yourself?
PHIL. Why, that which all the gods have pointed out
For me.
ARE. Dear, hide thyself.—Bring in the prince. [*Exit* LADY.
PHIL. Hide me from Pharamond!
When thunder speaks, which is the voice of God,
Though I do reverence, yet I hide me not;
And shall a stranger-prince have leave to brag
Unto a foreign nation that he made
Philaster hide himself?
ARE. He cannot know it.
PHIL. Though it should sleep for ever to the world,
It is a simple sin to hide myself,
Which will for ever on my conscience lie.
ARE. Then, good Philaster, give him scope and way
In what he says; for he is apt to speak
What you are loath to hear: for my sake, do.
PHIL. I will.

Re-enter LADY *with* PHARAMOND.

PHAR. My princely mistress, as true lovers ought,
I come to kiss these fair hands, and to show, [*Exit* LADY.
In outward ceremonies, the dear love
Writ in my heart.
PHIL. If I shall have an answer
No directlier, I am gone.
PHAR. To what would he
Have answer?
ARE. To his claim unto the kingdom.
PHAR. Sirrah, I forbare you before the King—
PHIL. Good sir, do so still: I would not talk with you.
PHAR. But now the time is fitter: do but offer
To make mention of right to any kingdom,
Though it be scarce habitable—
PHIL. Good sir,
Let me go.
PHAR. And, by the gods—
PHIL. Peace, Pharamond!
If thou—
ARE. Leave us, Philaster.
PHIL., *going*. I have done.
PHAR. You are gone! by Heaven, I'll fetch you back.
PHIL., *returning*. You shall not need.
PHAR. What now?
PHIL. Know, Pharamond,

I loathe to brawl with such a blast as thou,
Who art naught but a valiant voice; but, if
Thou shalt provoke me further, men shall say,
"Thou wert", and not lament it.
PHAR. Do you slight
My greatness so, and in the chamber of
The princess? [311
PHIL. It is a place to which I must confess
I owe a reverence; but, were't the church,
Ay, at the altar, there's no place so safe,
Where thou dar'st injure me, but I dare kill thee;
And, for your greatness, know, sir, I can grasp
You and your greatness thus, thus into nothing. [321
Give not a word, not a word back! Farewell! [*Exit.*
PHAR. 'Tis an odd fellow, madam; we must stop
His mouth with some office when we are married.
ARE. You were best make him your controller.
PHAR. I think he would discharge it well. But, madam, [331
I hope our hearts are knit; and yet so slow
The ceremonies of state are, that 'twill be long
Before our hands be so. If then you please,
Being agreed in heart, let us not wait
For dreaming form, but take a little stolen [340
Delights, and so prevent[10] our joys to come.
ARE. If you dare speak such thoughts,
I must withdraw in honor. [*Retires into the inner room.*
PHAR. The constitution of my body will never hold out till the wedding; I must seek elsewhere. [*Exit.*

[10] anticipate.

ACT TWO

SCENE I (B)

PHILASTER'S *page,* BELLARIO, *is a girl who, for love of him, has dressed herself as a boy.* PHILASTER *has just broken to her that she is to wait upon the* PRINCESS, *and the news has not been received joyfully.*

The scene is PHILASTER'S *room in the palace; the time, shortly after the scene just recorded.*

PHIL. And thou shalt find her honorable, boy; [11
Full of regard unto thy tender youth,
For thine own modesty; and, for my sake,
Apter to give than thou wilt be to ask,
Ay, or deserve.
BELL. Sir, you did take me up
When I was nothing, and only yet am something
By being yours. You trusted me un- [20
known;
And that which you were apt to conster
A simple innocence in me, perhaps
Might have been craft, the cunning of a boy
Hardened in lies and theft: yet ventured you
To part my miseries and me; for which,
I never can expect to serve a lady
That bears more honor in her breast than you. [31
PHIL. But, boy, it will prefer thee. Thou art young,
And bear'st a childish overflowing love
To them that clap thy cheeks and speak thee fair yet;
But when thy judgment comes to rule those passions,
Thou wilt remember best those careful friends [40
That placed thee in the noblest way of life.
She is a princess I prefer[1] thee to.
BELL. In that small time that I have seen the world,
I never knew a man hasty to part with
A servant he thought trusty: I remember,

[1] recommend.

My father would prefer the boys he kept
To greater men than he; but did it not
Till they were grown too saucy for himself.
PHIL. Why, gentle boy, I find no fault at all
In thy behavior.
BELL. Sir, if I have made
A fault in ignorance, instruct my youth:
I shall be willing, if not apt, to learn;
Age and experience will adorn my mind
With larger knowledge; and, if I have done
A wilful fault, think me not past all hope
For once. What master holds so strict a hand
Over his boy that he will part with him
Without one warning? Let me be corrected,
To break my stubbornness, if it be so,
Rather than turn me off; and I shall mend.
PHIL. Thy love doth plead so prettily to stay,
That, trust me, I could weep to part with thee.
Alas, I do not turn thee off! thou know'st
It is my business that doth call thee hence;
And when thou art with her thou dwell'st with me.
Think so, and 'tis so: and when time is full,
That thou hast well discharged this heavy trust,
Laid on so weak a one, I will again
With joy receive thee; as I live, I will!
Nay, weep not, gentle boy. 'Tis more than time
Thou didst attend the princess.
BELL. I am gone.
But, since I am to part with you, my lord,
And none knows whether I shall live to do
More service for you, take this little prayer:
Heaven bless your loves, your fights, all your designs!
May sick men, if they have your wish, be well;
And Heaven hate those you curse, though I be one! [*Exit.*
PHIL. The love of boys unto their lords is strange;
I have read wonders of it: yet this boy
For my sake (if a man may judge by looks
And speech) would out-do story. I may see
A day to pay him for his loyalty.

SCENE II (B, F)[2]

Later on the same day, the hot-blooded PHARAMOND *is in a gallery in the palace, where he expects to intercept some of the Court ladies. The gallery is open at either end, and it is possible also to pass behind the hangings that line its entire length.*

PHAR. Why should these ladies stay so long? They must come this way: I know the queen employs 'em not; for the reverend mother sent me word they would all be for the garden. If they should all prove honest[3] now, I were in a fair taking; I was never so long without sport in my life, and, in my conscience, 'tis not my fault. Oh, for our country ladies!

Enter GALATEA.

<Here's one bolted; I'll hound at her.—>
Madam!
GAL. Your grace!
PHAR. Shall I not be a trouble?
GAL. Not to me, sir.
PHAR. Nay, nay, you are too quick. By this sweet hand—
GAL. You'll be forsworn, sir; 'tis but an old glove.
If you will talk at distance, I am for you:
But, good prince, be not bawdy, nor do not brag;
These two I bar;
And then, I think, I shall have sense enough
To answer all the weighty apophthegms
Your royal blood shall manage.
PHAR. Dear lady, can you love?

[2] Fletcher's cooperation is to be seen only from Galatea's aside as she passes out behind the hangings.
[3] chaste.

GAL. Dear, prince! how dear? I ne'er cost you a coach yet, nor put you to the dear repentance of a banquet. Here's no scarlet, sir, to blush the sin out it was [40
given for. This wire mine own hair covers; and this face has been so far from being dear to any, that it ne'er cost a penny painting; and, for the rest of my poor wardrobe, such as you see, it leaves no hand behind it, to make the jealous mercer's wife curse our good doings.

PHAR. You mistake me, lady.

GAL. Lord, I do so: would you or I could help it! [50

PHAR. You're very dangerous bitter, like a potion.

GAL. No, sir, I do not mean to purge you, though
I mean to purge a little time on you.

PHAR. Do ladies of this country use to give
No more respect to men of my full being?

GAL. Full being! I understand you not, unless your grace means growing to [60
fatness; and then your only remedy (upon my knowledge, prince) is, in a morning, a cup of neat white wine brewed with carduus, then fast till supper; about eight you may eat; use exercise, and keep a sparrow-hawk; you can shoot in a tiller:[4] but, of all, your grace must fly phlebotomy, fresh pork, conger, and clarified whey; they are all duller[s] of the vital spirits. [70

PHAR. Lady, you talk of nothing all this while.

GAL. 'Tis very true, sir; I talk of you.

PHAR. <This is a crafty wench; I like her wit well; 'twill be rare to stir up a leaden appetite: she's a Danaë, and must be courted in a shower of gold.>—Madam, look here; all these, and more than— [79

GAL. What have you there, my lord? gold? now, as I live, 'tis fair gold! You would have silver for it, to play with the pages: you could not have taken me in a worse time; but, if you have present use, my lord, I'll send my man with silver and keep your gold for you. [*Takes gold.*

PHAR. Lady, lady!

GAL. She's coming, sir, behind, will take white money.—<Yet for all this I'll [89
match ye.> [*Exit behind the hangings.*

PHAR. <If there be but two such more in this kingdom, and near the court, we may even hang up our harps. Ten such camphire constitutions as this would call the golden age again in question, and teach the old way for every ill-faced husband to get his own children; and what a mischief that would breed let all consider! [99

Enter MEGRA.

Here's another: if she be of the same last, the devil shall pluck her on.>—Many fair mornings, lady.

MEG. As many mornings bring as many days,
Fair, sweet, and hopeful to your grace!

PHAR. <She gives good words yet; sure this wench is free.—>
If your more serious business do not call you, [110
Let me hold quarter with you; we will talk
An hour out quickly.

MEG. What would your grace talk of?

PHAR. Of some such pretty subject as yourself:
I'll go no further than your eye or lip;
There's theme enough for one man for an age.

MEG. Sir, they stand right, and my lips are yet even, smooth, [121
Young enough, ripe enough, and red enough,
Or my glass wrongs me.

PHAR. Oh, they are two twinned cherries dyed in blushes,
Which those fair suns above with their bright beams
Reflect upon and ripen. Sweetest beauty, [130
Bow down those branches, that the longing taste
Of the faint looker-on may meet those blessings,
And taste, and live.

[4] shoot with a cross-bow.

MEG. <Oh, delicate sweet prince!
She that hath snow enough about her heart
To take the wanton spring of ten such lines off,
May be a nun without probation.>—Sir,
You have in such neat poetry gathered a kiss,
That if I had but five lines of that number,
Such pretty begging blanks, I should commend
Your forehead or your cheeks, and kiss you too.

PHAR. Do it in prose; you cannot miss it, madam.

MEG. I shall, I shall.

PHAR. By my life, but you shall not;
I'll prompt you first. [*Kisses her.*] Can you do it now?

MEG. Methinks 'tis easy, now you ha' done't before me;
But yet I should stick at it.

PHAR. Stick till to-morrow;
I'll ne'er part you, sweetest. But we lose time:
Can you love me?

MEG. Love you, my lord! how would you have me love you?

PHAR. I'll teach you in a short sentence, 'cause I will not load your memory: this is all; love me, and lie with me.

MEG. Was it lie with you that you said? 'tis impossible.

PHAR. Not to a willing mind, that will endeavor: if I do not teach you to do it as easily in one night as you'll go to bed, I'll lose my royal blood for't.

MEG. Why, prince, you have a lady of your own
That yet wants teaching.

PHAR. I'll sooner teach a mare the old measures,[5] than teach her anything belonging to the function. She's afraid to lie with herself, if she have but any masculine imaginations about her. I know, when we are married, I must ravish her.

MEG. By my honor, that's a foul fault, indeed;
But time and your good help will wear it out, sir.

PHAR. And for any other I see, excepting your dear self, dearest lady, I had rather be Sir Tim the schoolmaster, and leap a dairymaid, madam.

MEG. Has your grace seen the court-star, Galatea?

PHAR. Out upon her! she's as cold of her favor as an apoplex: she sailed by but now.

MEG. And how do you hold her wit, sir?

PHAR. I hold her wit? The strength of all the guard cannot hold it, if they were tied to it; she would blow 'em out of the kingdom. They talk of Jupiter; he's but a squib-cracker to her: look well about you, and you may find a tongue-bolt.[6] But speak, sweet lady, shall I be freely welcome?

MEG. Whither?

PHAR. To your bed. If you mistrust my faith, you do me the unnoblest wrong.

MEG. I dare not, prince, I dare not.

PHAR. Make your own conditions, my purse shall seal 'em; and what you dare imagine you can want I'll furnish you withal; give two hours to your thoughts every morning about it. Come, I know you are bashful;
Speak in my ear, will you be mine? Keep this, [*Gives her a ring.*
And with it me: soon I will visit you.

MEG. My lord,
My chamber's most unsafe; but, when 'tis night,
I'll find some means to slip into your lodging;
Till when—

PHAR. Till when, this and my heart go with thee! [MEGRA *proceeds on her way; and* PHARAMOND *goes out in the contrary direction.*

GALATEA *comes forth from behind the hangings.*

GAL. Oh, thou pernicious petticoat

[5] dances.

[6] an arrow shot from her tongue.

prince! are these your virtues? Well, if I do not lay a train to blow your sport up, I am no woman; and, Lady Towsabel, I'll fit you for't.

Scene III (B)

It is the evening of the same day; and again Arethusa *and the* Lady *are together in the former's room.*

Are. Where's the boy?
Lady. Within, madam.
Are. Gave you him gold, to buy him clothes?
Lady. I did.
Are. And has he done't?
Lady. Yes, madam. [10
Are. 'Tis a pretty
Sad-talking boy, is it not? Asked you his name?
Lady. No, madam.

Enter Galatea.

Are. Oh, you are welcome. What good news?
Gal. As good as any one can tell your grace
That says she has done that you would have wished. [21
Are. Hast thou discovered?
Gal. I have strained a point
Of modesty for you.
Are. I prithee, how?
Gal. In list'ning after bawdry. I see, let a lady
Live never so modestly, she shall be sure to find [29
A lawful time to hearken after bawdry.
Your prince, brave Pharamond, was so hot on't!
Are. With whom?
Gal. Why, with the lady I suspected:
I can tell the time and place.
Are. Oh, when, and where?
Gal. To-night, his lodging.
Are. Run thyself
Into the presence; mingle there again
With other ladies; leave the rest to me.
[*Exit* Galatea. [41
<If destiny (to whom we dare not say,
Why didst thou[7] this) have not decreed it so,
In lasting leaves (whose smallest characters
Were never altered yet), this match shall break.>
—Where's the boy?
Lady. Here, madam. [50

Enter Bellario, *richly dressed.*

Are. Sir,
You are sad to change your service; is't not so?
Bell. Madam, I have not changed; I wait on you,
To do him service.
Are. Thou disclaim'st in me.
Tell me thy name.
Bel. Bellario. [60
Are. Thou canst sing and play?
Bel. If grief will give me leave, madam, I can.
Are. Alas, what kind of grief can thy years know?
Hadst thou a curst[8] master when thou went'st to school?
Thou art not capable of other grief;
Thy brows and cheeks are smooth as waters be [70
When no breath troubles them: believe me, boy,
Care seeks out wrinkled brows and hollow eyes,
And builds himself caves, to abide in them.
Come, sir, tell me truly, doth your lord love me?
Bel. Love, madam? I know not what it is. [80
Are. Canst thou know grief, and never yet knew'st love?
Thou art deceived, boy. Does he speak of me
As if he wished me well?
Bel. If it be love
To forget all respect to his own friends
With thinking of your face; if it be love
To sit cross-armed and sigh away the day, [90
Mingled with starts, crying your name as loud
And hastily as men i' the streets do fire;

[7] B, "thou didst."

[8] cross.

If it be love to weep himself away
When he but hears of any lady dead
Or killed, because it might have been your chance;
If, when he goes to rest (which will not be),
'Twixt every prayer he says, to name you once,
As others drop a bead, be to be in love,
Then, madam, I dare swear he loves you.
ARE. Oh, you're a cunning boy, and taught to lie
For your lord's credit! but thou know'st a lie
That bears this sound is welcomer to me
Than any truth that says he loves me not,
Lead the way, boy.—[*To the* LADY.] Do you attend me too.—
[*To* BELLARIO.] 'Tis thy lord's business hastes me thus. Away! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV (B, F)[9]

It is night now, outside PHARAMOND'S *lodging in the palace.*

Enter DION, CLEREMONT, THRASILINE, MEGRA, *and* GALATEA.

DION. Come, ladies, shall we talk a round? As men
Do walk a mile, women should talk an hour
After supper: 'tis their exercise.
GAL. 'Tis late.
MEG. 'Tis all
My eyes will do to lead me to my bed.
GAL. I fear, they are so heavy, you'll scarce find
The way to your own lodging with 'em to-night.

Enter PHARAMOND.

THRAS. The prince!
PHAR. Not a-bed, ladies? you're good sitters-up:
What think you of a pleasant dream, to last
Till morning?
MEG. I should choose, my lord, a pleasing wake before it.

[9] Beaumont gives place to Fletcher at Megra's appearance at the window.

Enter ARETHUSA *and* BELLARIO.

ARE. 'Tis well, my lord; you're courting of these ladies.—
Is't not late, gentlemen?
CLER. Yes, madam.
ARE. Wait you there. [*Exit.*
MEG. <She's jealous, as I live.> Look you, my lord,
The princess has a Hylas, an Adonis.
PHAR. His form is angel-like.
MEG. Why, this is he
That must, when you are wed, sit by your pillow
Like young Apollo, with his hand and voice
Binding your thoughts in sleep; the princess
Does provide him for you and for herself.
PHAR. I find no music in these boys.
MEG. Nor I:
They can do little, and that small they do,
They have not wit to hide.
DION. <Serves he the princess?
THRAS. Yes.
DION. 'Tis a sweet boy: how brave she keeps him!>
PHAR. Ladies all, good rest; I mean to kill a buck
To-morrow morning ere you've done your dreams.
MEG. All happiness attend your grace!
[*Exit* PHARAMOND.
Gentlemen, good rest!—Come, shall we to bed?
GAL. Yes.—All, good night.
DION. May your dreams be true to you!—[*Exeunt* GALATEA *and* MEGRA.

In a modern theatre we should have the curtain lowered, "to indicate the passage of an hour" or more, for there has been time for MEGRA *to go to her room and then steal out, to visit* PHARAMOND.

What shall we do, gallants? 'tis late. The King
Is up still: see, he comes; a guard along With him.

Enter KING *with* ARETHUSA, *Guards and Attendants.*

KING. Look your intelligence be true.
ARE. Upon my life, it is: and I do hope
Your highness will not tie me to a man
That in the heat of wooing throws me off, [80
And takes another.
DION. What should this mean?
KING. If it be true,
That lady had been better have embraced
Cureless diseases. Get you to your rest:
You shall be righted. [*Exeunt* ARETHUSA *and* BELLARIO.
—Gentlemen, draw near;
We shall employ you. Is young Pharamond [91
Come to his lodging?
DION. I saw him enter there.
KING. Haste, some of you, and cunningly discover
If Megra be in her lodging. [*Exit* DION.
CLER. Sir,
She parted hence but now, with other ladies.
KING. <If she be there, we shall [100 not need to make
A vain discovery of our suspicion.—
You gods, I see that who unrighteously
Holds wealth or state from others shall be cursed
In that which meaner men are blest withal;
Ages to come shall know no male of him
Left to inherit, and his name shall be
Blotted from earth; if he have any child,
It shall be crossly matched; the gods themselves [112
Shall sow wild strife betwixt her lord and her.
Yet, if it be your wills, forgive the sin
I have committed; let it not fall
Upon this undeserving[10] child of mine!
She has not broke your laws. But how can I
Look to be heard of gods, that must be just, [121
Praying upon the ground I hold by wrong?>

Re-enter DION.

DION. Sir, I have asked, and her women swear she is within; but they, I think, are bawds. I told 'em, I must speak with her; they laughed, and said, their lady lay speechless. I said, my business was important; they said, their lady was [130 about it. I grew hot, and cried, my business was a matter that concerned life and death; they answered, so was sleeping, at which their lady was. I urged again, she had scarce time to be so since last I saw her: they smiled again, and seemed to instruct me that sleeping was nothing but lying down and winking. Answers more direct I could not get: in short, sir, I think she is not there. [140
KING. 'Tis then no time to dally.—
You o' the guard,
Wait at the back door of the prince's lodging,
And see that none pass thence, upon your lives. [*Exeunt Guards.*
Knock, gentlemen. [DION *and* CLEREMONT *knock at the door of* PHARAMOND'S *lodging.*] Knock loud [149 [*they knock again*]; louder yet. [*They knock yet again.*
What, has their pleasure taken off their hearing?—
I'll break your meditations.—Knock again.— [*They knock once more.*
Not yet? I do not think he sleeps, having this
'Larum by him.—Once more. [*Again there is a knocking, and this time it is effective,* PHARAMOND *appearing at a window.*]—Pharamond! prince!
PHAR. What saucy groom knocks [162 at this dead of night?
Where be our waiters? By my vexëd soul,
He meets his death that meets me, for this boldness.
KING. Prince, prince, you wrong your thoughts; we are your friends:
Come down. [170
PHAR. The King?

[10] Not deserving of punishment. The 1622 Q has "understanding," in the sense of "standing under."

KING. The same, sir. Come down, sir:
We have cause of present counsel with you.

PHARAMOND *disappears, and a moment or two later enters below.*

PHAR. If your grace please to use me, I'll attend you
To your chamber.
KING. No, 'tis too late, prince; I'll [180
make bold with yours.
PHAR. I have some private reasons to myself
Makes me unmannerly, and say you cannot.—
Nay, press not forward, gentlemen; he must
Come through my life that comes here.
KING. Sir, be resolved I must and will come.—Enter. [190
PHAR. I will not be dishonored: he that enters
Enters upon his death.
Sir, 'tis a sign you make no stranger of me,
To bring these renegadoes to my chamber
At these unseasoned hours.
KING. Why do you
Chafe yourself so? you are not wronged, nor shall be; [200
Only I'll search your lodging, for some cause
To ourself known.—Enter, I say.
PHAR. I say, no.
[MEGRA *appears at the* PRINCE'S *window.*
MEG. Let 'em enter, prince, let 'em enter;
I am up and ready: I know their business; [209
'Tis the poor breaking of a lady's honor
They hunt so hotly after; let 'em enjoy it.—
You have your business, gentlemen; I lay here.
Oh, my lord the King, this is not noble in you
To make public the weakness of a woman!
KING. Come down. [219
MEG. I dare, my lord. Your hootings and your clamors,
Your private whispers and your broad fleerings,
Can no more vex my soul than this base carriage;
But I have vengeance yet in store for some
Shall, in the most contempt you can have of me,
Be joy and nourishment. [230
KING. Will you come down?
MEG. Yes, to laugh at your worst; <but I shall wring you,
If my skill fail me not.> [*Exit above.*
KING. Sir, I must dearly chide you for this looseness;
You have wronged a worthy lady: but, no more.— [238
Conduct him to my lodging and to bed.
[*Exeunt* PHARAMOND *and Attendants.*
CLER., *to* DION. <Get him another wench, and you bring him to bed indeed.
DION. 'Tis strange a man cannot ride a stage or two, to breathe himself, without a warrant. If this gear hold, that lodgings be searched thus, pray God we may lie with our own wives in safety, that they be not by some trick of state mistaken!> [249

Enter MEGRA *below.*

KING. Now, lady of honor, where's your honor now?
No man can fit your palate but the prince:
Thou most ill-shrouded rottenness, thou piece
Made by a painter and a 'pothecary,
Thou troubled sea of lust, thou wilderness
Inhabited by wild thoughts, thou swoln cloud [260
Of infection, thou ripe mine of all diseases,
Thou all-sin, all-hell, and, last, all-devils, tell me,
Had you none to pull on with your courtesies
But he that must be mine, and wrong my daughter?
By all the gods, all these, and all the pages, [270

And all the court, shall hoot thee through the court,
Fling rotten oranges, make ribald rhymes,
And sear thy name with candles upon walls!
Do you laugh, Lady Venus?
MEG. Faith, sir, you must pardon me;
I cannot choose but laugh to see you merry.
If you do this, O King! nay, if you dare do it, [281
By all those gods you swore by, and as many
More of my own, I will have fellows, and such
Fellows in it, as shall make noble mirth!
The princess, your dear daughter, shall stand by me
On walls, and sung in ballads, any thing:
Urge me no more; I know her and her haunts, [291
Her lays, leaps, and outlays, and will discover all;
Nay, will dishonor her. I know the boy
She keeps; a handsome boy, about eighteen;
Know what she does with him, where, and when.
Come, sir, you put me to a woman's madness, [300
The glory of a fury; and if I do not
Do't to the height—
KING. What boy is this she raves at?
MEG. Alas! good-minded prince, you know not these things!
I am loth to reveal 'em. Keep this fault,
As you would keep your health, from the hot air [309
Of the corrupted people, or, by Heaven,
I will not fall alone. What I have known
Shall be as public as a print; all tongues
Shall speak it as they do the language they
Are born in, as free and commonly; I'll set it,
Like a prodigious star, for all to gaze at,
And so high and glowing, that other kingdoms far and foreign [320
Shall read it there, nay, travel with it, till they find
No tongue to make it more, nor no more people;
And then behold the fall of your fair princess!
KING. Has she a boy?
CLER. So please your grace, I have seen a boy wait on her,
A faiï boy. [330
KING. Go, get you to your quarter:
For this time I will study to forget you.
MEG. Do you study to forget me, and I'll study to forget you. [*Exeunt* KING *and* MEGRA, *severally*.
CLER. Why, here's a male spirit fit for Hercules. If ever there be Nine Worthies of women, this wench shall ride astride and be their captain. [339
DION. Sure, she has a garrison of devils in her tongue, she uttered such balls of wild-fire: she has so nettled the King that all the doctors in the country will scarce cure him. That boy was a strange-found-out antidote to cure her infections; that boy, that princess' boy; that brave, chaste, virtuous lady's boy; and a fair boy, a well-spoken boy! All these considered can make nothing else—but there I leave you, gentlemen. [350
THRA. Nay, we'll go wander with you. [*Exeunt*.

ACT THREE

SCENE I (B)

We break in upon a conversation between DION, CLEREMONT, *and* THRASILINE *in a courtyard of the palace. It is early morning, presumably of the next day, though it is hard to account for the change in* DION'S *outlook within so short a time. Whereas before he was all admiration for the* PRINCESS, *he now thinks her a "lascivious lady."*

CLER. Nay, doubtless, 'tis true. [10
DION. Ay; and 'tis the gods
That raised this punishment, to scourge the King
With his own issue. Is it not a shame

For us that should write noble in the land,
For us that should be freemen, to behold
A man that is the bravery of his age,
Philaster, pressed down from his royal right
By this regardless[1] King, and only look
And see the sceptre ready to be cast
Into the hands of that lascivious lady
That lives in lust with a smooth boy, now to be married
To yon strange prince, who, but that people please
To let him be a prince, is born a slave
In that which should be his most noble part,
His mind?

THRA. That man that would not stir with you
To aid Philaster, let the gods forget
That such a creature walks upon the earth!

CLER. Philaster is too backward in't himself.
The gentry do await it; and the people,
Against their nature, are all bent for him,
And, like a field of standing corn, that's moved
With a stiff gale, their heads bow all one way.

DION. The only cause that draws Philaster back
From this attempt is the fair princess' love,
Which he admires, and we can now confute.

THRA. Perhaps he'll not believe it.

DION. Why, gentlemen,
'Tis without question so.

CLER. Ay, 'tis past speech
She lives dishonestly: but how shall we,
If he be curious, work upon his faith?

THRA. We all are satisfied within ourselves.

DION. Since it is true, and tends to his own good,
I'll make this new report to be my knowledge;
I'll say I know it; nay, I'll swear I saw it.

CLER. It will be best.

THRA. 'Twill move him.

DION. Here he comes.

Enter PHILASTER.

Good morrow to your honor: we have spent
Some time in seeking you.

PHIL. My worthy friends,
You that can keep your memories to know
Your friend in miseries, and cannot frown
On men disgraced for virtue, a good day
Attend you all! What service may I do
Worthy your acceptation?

DION. My good lord,
We come to urge that virtue, which we know
Lives in your breast, forth. Rise, and make a head:
The nobles and the people are all dulled
With this usurping King; and not a man
That ever heard the word or knew such a thing
As virtue but will second your attempts.

PHIL. How honorable is this love in you
To me that have deserved none! Know, my friends
(You, that were born to shame your poor Philaster
With too much courtesy), I could afford
To melt myself in thanks: but my designs
Are not yet ripe: suffice it, that ere long
I shall employ your loves; but yet the time
Is short of what I would.

DION. The time is fuller, sir, than you expect;
That which hereafter will not, perhaps, be reached
By violence may now be caught. As for the King,
You know the people have long hated him;
But now the princess, whom they loved—

PHIL. Why, what of her?

DION. Is loathed as much as he.

[1] unworthy of regard.

PHIL. By what strange means?
DION. She's known a whore.
PHIL. Thou liest.
DION. My lord—
PHIL. Thou liest, [*Offers to draw his sword; but* CLEREMONT [120 *and* THRASILINE *prevent him.*
And thou shalt feel it! I had thought thy mind
Had been of honor. Thus to rob a lady
Of her good name, is an infectious sin
Not to be pardoned: be it false as hell,
'Twill never be redeemed, if it be sown
Amongst the people, fruitful to increase
All evil they shall hear. Let me alone
That I may cut off falsehood whilst it springs! [131
Set hills on hills betwixt me and the man
That utters this, and I will scale them all,
And from the utmost top fall on his neck,
Like thunder from a cloud.
DION. This is most strange;
Sure, he does love her.
PHIL. I do love fair truth: [140
She is my mistress, and who injures her
Draws vengeance from me.—Sirs, let go my arms.
THRAS. Nay, good my lord, be patient.
CLER. Sir,
Remember this is your honored friend, that comes
To do his service, and will show you why
He uttered this. [150
PHIL. I ask you pardon, sir;
My zeal to truth made me unmannerly:
Should I have heard dishonor spoke of you,
Behind your back, untruly, I had been
As much distempered and enraged as now.
DION. But this, my lord, is truth.
PHIL. Oh, say not so!
Good sir, forbear to say so; 'tis then truth [161
That womankind is false: urge it no more;
It is impossible. Why should you think
The princess light?
DION. Why, she was taken at it.
PHIL. 'Tis false! by Heaven, 'tis false! it cannot be!—
Can it? Speak, gentlemen; for God's love, speak! [170
Is't possible? Can women all be damned?
DION. Why, no, my lord.
PHIL. Why, then, it cannot be.
DION. And she was taken with her boy.
PHIL. What boy?
DION. A page, a boy that serves her.
PHIL. Oh, good gods!
A little boy?
DION. Ay; know you him, my lord?
PHIL. <Hell and sin know him!>—
Sir, you are deceived; [181
I'll reason it a little coldly with you:
If she were lustful, would she take a boy,
That knows not yet desire? she would have one
Should meet her thoughts and know the sin he acts,
Which is the great delight of wickedness.
You are abused, and so is she, and I.
DION. How you, my lord? [191
PHIL. Why, all the world's abused
In an unjust report.
DION. Oh, noble sir, your virtues cannot look
Into the subtle thoughts of woman!
In short, my lord, I took them; I myself.
PHIL. Now, all the devils, thou didst! Fly from my rage!
Would thou hadst ta'en devils engend'ring plagues, [201
When thou didst take them! Hide thee from mine eyes!
Would thou hadst taken thunder on thy breast,
When thou didst take them, or been strucken dumb
For ever; that this foul deed might have slept
In silence! [210
THRAS. <Have you known him so ill-tempered?
CLER. Never before.>
PHIL. The winds, that are let loose
From the four several corners of the earth,

And spread themselves all over sea and land,
Kiss not a chaste one. What friend bears a sword [220
To run me thorough?

DION. Why, my lord, are you
So moved at this?

PHIL. When any fall from virtue,
I am distract; I have an interest in't.

DION. But, good my lord, recall yourself, and think
What's best to be done.

PHIL. I thank you; I will do it: [229
Please you to leave me; I'll consider of it.
To-morrow I will find your lodging forth,
And give you answer.

DION. All the gods direct you
The readiest way!

THRAS. <He was extreme impatient.

CLER. It was his virtue and his noble mind.> [*Exeunt* DION, CLEREMONT, *and* THRASILINE.

PHIL. I had forgot to ask him where he took them; [240
I'll follow him. Oh, that I had a sea
Within my breast, to quench the fire I feel!
More circumstances will but fan this fire.
It more afflicts me now, to know by whom
This deed is done, than simply that 'tis done;
And he that tells me this is honorable,
As far from lies as she is far from truth.
Oh, that, like beasts, we could not grieve ourselves [252
With that we see not! Bulls and rams will fight
To keep their females, standing in their sight;
But take 'em from them, and you take at once
Their spleens away; and they will fall again [260
Unto their pastures, growing fresh and fat;
And taste the waters of the springs as sweet
As 'twas before, finding no start in sleep;
But miserable man—

Enter BELLARIO.

<See, see, you gods,
He walks still; and the face you let him wear [270
When he was innocent is still the same,
Not blasted! Is this justice? do you mean
To entrap mortality, that you allow
Treason so smooth a brow? I cannot now
Think he is guilty.>

BEL. Health to you, my lord!
The princess doth commend her love, her life, [280
And this, unto you. [*Gives a letter.*

PHIL. Oh, Bellario,
Now I perceive she loves me! she does show it
In loving thee, my boy: she has made thee brave.

BEL. My lord, she has attired me past my wish,
Past my desert; more fit for her attendant, [290
Though far unfit for me who do attend.

PHIL. Thou art grown courtly, boy.
<Oh, let all women,
That love black deeds, learn to dissemble here!
Here, by this paper, she does write to me
As if her heart were mines of adamant
To all the world besides; but, unto me,
A maiden-snow that melted with my looks.> [301
Tell me, my boy, how doth the princess use thee?
For I shall guess her love to me by that.

BEL. Scarce like her servant, but as if I were
Something allied to her, or had preserved
Her life three times by my fidelity;
As mothers fond do use their only sons,
As I'd use one that's left unto my trust,
For whom my life should pay if he met harm; [312
So she does use me.

PHIL. Why, this is wondrous well:
But what kind language does she feed thee with?

BEL. Why, she does tell me she will trust my youth
With all her loving secrets, and does call me
Her pretty servant; bids me weep no more
For leaving you; she'll see my services
Regarded:[2] and such words of that soft strain
That I am nearer weeping when she ends
Than ere she spake.
PHIL. This is much better still.
BEL. Are you not ill, my lord?
PHIL. Ill? No, Bellario.
BEL. Methinks your words fall not from off your tongue
So evenly, nor is there in your looks
That quietness that I was wont to see.
PHIL. Thou art deceived, boy: and she strokes thy head?
BEL. Yes.
PHIL. And she does clap thy cheeks?
BEL. She does, my lord.
PHIL. And she does kiss thee, boy? ha!
BEL. How, my lord?
PHIL. She kisses thee?
BEL. Never, my lord, by heaven.
PHIL. That's strange. I know she does.
BEL. No, by my life.
PHIL. Why, then she does not love me. Come, she does:
I bade her do it; I charged her, by all charms
Of love between us, by the hope of peace
We should enjoy, to yield thee all delights
Naked as to her bed; I took her oath
Thou shouldst enjoy her. Tell me, gentle boy,
Is she not parallelless? is not her breath
Sweet as Arabian winds when fruits are ripe?
Are not her breasts two liquid ivory balls?
Is she not all a lasting mine of joy?
BEL. Ay, now I see why my disturbëd thoughts
Were so perplexed: when first I went to her,
My heart held augury. You are abused;
Some villain has abused you: I do see
Whereto you tend. Fall rocks upon his head
That put this to you! 'tis some subtle train
To bring that noble frame of yours to naught.
PHIL. Thou think'st I will be angry with thee. Come,
Thou shalt know all my drift: I hate her more
Than I love happiness, and placed thee there
To pry with narrow eyes into her deeds.
Hast thou discovered? is she fallen to lust,
As I would wish her? Speak some comfort to me.
BEL. My lord, you did mistake the boy you sent:
Had she the lust of sparrows or of goats,
Had she a sin that way, hid from the world,
Beyond the name of lust, I would not aid
Her base desires: but what I came to know,
As servant to her, I would not reveal,
To make my life last ages.
PHIL. Oh, my heart!
This is a salve worse than the main disease.
Tell me thy thoughts; for I will know the least
That dwells within thee, or will rip thy heart
To know it: I will see thy thoughts as plain
As I do now thy face.
BEL. Why, so you do.
She is (for aught I know) by all the gods,
As chaste as ice! but were she foul as hell,
And I did know it thus, the breath of kings,
The points of swords, tortures, nor bulls of brass,
Should draw it from me.
PHIL. Then it is no time
To dally with thee; I will take thy life,

[2] "Rewarded," in the 1622 quarto.

For I do hate thee: I could curse thee now.
BEL. If you do hate, you could not curse me worse;
The gods have not a punishment in store
Greater for me than is your hate.
PHIL. Fie, fie,
So young and so dissembling! Tell me when
And where thou didst enjoy her, or let plagues
Fall [up]on me, if I destroy thee not!
BEL. By Heaven I never did; and when I lie
To save my life, may I live long and loathed!
Hew me asunder, and, whilst I can think,
I'll love those pieces you have cut away
Better than those that grow, and kiss those limbs
Because you made 'em so.
PHIL. Fear'st thou not death?
Can boys contemn that?
BEL. Oh, what boy is he
Can be content to live to be a man
That sees the best of men thus passionate,
Thus without reason?
PHIL. Oh, but thou dost not know
What 'tis to die.
BEL. Yes, I do know, my lord:
'Tis less than to be born; a lasting sleep;
A quiet resting from all jealousy,
A thing we all pursue. I know, besides,
It is but giving over of a game
That must be lost.
PHIL. But there are pains, false boy,
For perjured souls: think but on those, and then
Thy heart will melt, and thou wilt utter all.
BEL. May they fall all upon me whilst I live,
If I be perjured, or have ever thought
Of that you charge me with! If I be false,
Send me to suffer in those punishments
You speak of; kill me!
PHIL. <Oh, what should I do?
Why, who can but believe him? he does swear
So earnestly that, if it were not true,
The gods would not endure him.>
[*Sheathes his sword.*
Rise, Bellario: [BELLARIO *rises.*
Thy protestations are so deep, and thou
Dost look so truly when thou utter'st them,
That, though I know 'em false as were my hopes,
I cannot urge thee further. But thou wert
To blame to injure me, for I must love
Thy honest looks, and take no revenge upon
Thy tender youth: a love from me to thee
Is firm, whate'er thou dost: it troubles me
That I have called the blood out of thy cheeks,
That did so well become thee. But, good boy,
Let me not see thee more: something is done
That will distract me, that will make me mad,
If I behold thee. If thou tender'st[3] me,
Let me not see thee.
BEL. I will fly as far
As there is morning, ere I give distaste
To that most honored mind. But through these tears,
Shed at my hopeless parting, I can see
A world of treason practised upon you,
And her, and me. Farewell for evermore!
If you shall hear that sorrow struck me dead,
And after find me loyal, let there be
A tear shed from you in my memory,
And I shall rest at peace. [*Exit.*
PHIL. Blessing be with thee,
Whatever thou deserv'st!—Oh, where shall I
Go bathe this body? Nature too unkind;
That made no medicine for a troubled mind!

[3] lovest.

SCENE II (B, F) [4]

A few moments later ARETHUSA *is in her room, alone.*

ARE. I marvel my boy comes not back again:
But that I know my love will question him
Over and over—how I slept, waked, talked;
How I remembered him when his dear name [10
Was last spoke; and how when I sighed, wept, sung,
And ten thousand such—I should be angry at his stay.

Enter KING.

KING. What, at your meditations! Who attends you?
ARE. None but my single self: I need no guard;
I do no wrong, nor fear none. [20
KING. Tell me, have You not a boy?
ARE. Yes, sir.
KING. What kind of boy?
ARE. A page, a waiting-boy.
KING. A handsome boy?
ARE. I think he be not ugly: well qualified
And dutiful I know him; I took him not For beauty. [30
KING. He speaks and sings and plays?
ARE. Yes, sir.
KING. About eighteen?
ARE. I never asked his age.
KING. Is he full of service?
ARE. By your pardon, why do you ask?
KING. Put him away.
ARE. Sir!
KING. Put him away, I say. H'as done you that good service shames me to speak of. [41
ARE. Good sir, let me understand you.
KING. If you fear me, Show it in duty; put away that boy.
ARE. Let me have reason for it, sir, and then
Your will is my command.
KING. Do not you blush to ask it? Cast him off,
Or I shall do the same to you. You're one [51
Shame with me, and so near unto myself,
That, by my life, I dare not tell myself
What you, myself, have done.
ARE. What have I done, my lord?
KING. 'Tis a new language, that all love to learn:
The common people speak it well already;
They need no grammar. Understand me well; [61
There be foul whispers stirring. Cast him off,
And suddenly: do it! Farewell. [*Exit.*
ARE. Where may a maiden live securely free,
Keeping her honor fair? Not with the living;
They feed upon opinions, errors, dreams,
And make 'em truths; they draw a [70 nourishment
Out of defamings, grow upon disgraces;
And, when they see a virtue fortified
Strongly above the battery of their tongues,
Oh, how they cast to sink it! and, defeated,
(Soul-sick with poison) strike the monuments
Where noble names lie sleeping, till they sweat, [81
And the cold marble melt.

Enter PHILASTER.

PHIL. Peace to your fairest thoughts, dearest mistress!
ARE. Oh, my dearest servant,[5] I have a war within me!
PHIL. He must be more than man that makes these crystals
Run into rivers. Sweetest fair, the [90 cause?
And, as I am your slave, tied to your goodness,
Your creature, made again from what I was
And newly-spirited, I'll right your honor.
ARE. Oh, my best love, that boy!
PHIL. What boy?

[4] Fletcher's hand is to be seen (with Beaumont's) only from the King's exit to Philaster's.

[5] lover.

ARE. The pretty boy you gave me—
PHIL. What of him?
ARE. Must be no more mine.
PHIL. Why?
ARE. They are jealous of him.
PHIL. Jealous! who?
ARE. The King.
PHIL. <Oh, my misfortune!
Then 'tis no idle jealousy.> Let him go.
ARE. Oh, cruel!
Are you hard-hearted too? who shall now tell you
How much I loved you? who shall swear it to you,
And weep the tears I send? who shall now bring you
Letters, rings, bracelets? lose his health in service?
Wake tedious nights in stories of your praise?
Who shall now sing your crying elegies,
And strike a sad soul into senseless pictures,
And make them mourn? who shall take up his lute,
And touch it till he crown a silent sleep
Upon my eyelids, making me dream, and cry,
"Oh, my dear, dear Philaster!"
PHIL. <Oh, my heart!
Would he had broken thee, that made thee know
This lady was not loyal!> Mistress,
Forget the boy; I'll get thee a far better.
ARE. Oh, never, never such a boy again
As my Bellario!
PHIL. 'Tis but your fond affection.
ARE. With thee, my boy, farewell for ever
All secrecy in servants! Farewell faith,
And all desire to do well for itself!
Let all that shall succeed thee for thy wrongs
Sell and betray chaste love!
PHIL. And all this passion for a boy?
ARE. He was your boy, and you put him to me,
And the loss of such must have a mourning for.
PHIL. Oh, thou forgetful woman!
ARE. How, my lord?
PHIL. False Arethusa!
Hast thou a medicine to restore my wits,
When I have lost 'em? If not, leave to talk
And do thus.
ARE. Do what, sir? would you sleep?
PHIL. For ever, Arethusa. Oh, you gods,
Give me a worthy patience! Have I stood
Naked, alone, the shock of many fortunes?
Have I seen mischiefs numberless and mighty
Grow like a sea upon me? Have I taken
Danger as stern as death into my bosom,
And laughed upon it, made it but a mirth,
And flung it by? Do I live now like him,
Under this tyrant King, that languishing
Hears his sad bell and sees his mourners? Do I
Bear all this bravely, and must sink at length
Under a woman's falsehood? Oh, that boy,
That cursëd boy! None but a villain boy
To ease your lust?
ARE. Nay, then, I am betrayed:
I feel the plot cast for my overthrow.
Oh, I am wretched!
PHIL. Now you may take that little right I have
To this poor kingdom: give it to your joy;
For I have no joy in it. Some far place,
Where never womankind durst set her foot
For[6] bursting with her poisons, must I seek,
And live to curse you:
There dig a cave, and preach to birds and beasts
What woman is, and help to save them from you;
How heaven is in your eyes, but in your hearts
More hell than hell has; how your tongues, like scorpions,

[6] For fear of.

Both heal and poison; how your thoughts are woven [201
With thousand changes in one subtle web,
And worn so by you; how that foolish man,
That reads the story of a woman's face
And dies believing it, is lost for ever;
How all the good you have is but a shadow,
I' the morning with you, and at night behind you, [211
Past and forgotten; how your vows are frosts,
Fast for a night, and with the next sun gone;
How you are, being taken all together,
A mere confusion, and so dead a chaos,
That love cannot distinguish. These sad texts,
Till my last hour, I am bound to utter of you. [221
So, farewell all my woe, all my delight!
[*Exit.*

ARE. Be merciful, ye gods, and strike me dead!
What way have I deserved this? Make my breast
Transparent as pure crystal, that the world,
Jealous of me, may see the foulest [230 thought
My heart holds. Where shall a woman turn her eyes,
To find out constancy?

This is the moment chosen by the unfortunate BELLARIO *to intrude upon* ARETHUSA'S *privacy.*

<Save me, how black
And guiltily, methinks, that boy looks now!> [240
Oh, thou dissembler, that, before thou spak'st,
Wert in thy cradle false, sent to make lies
And betray innocents! Thy lord and thou
May glory in the ashes of a maid
Fooled by her passion; but the conquest is [249
Nothing so great as wicked. Fly away!
Let my command force thee to that which shame
Would do without it. If thou understood'st
The loathëd office thou hast undergone,
Why, thou wouldst hide thee under heaps of hills,
Lest men should dig and find thee.
BEL. Oh, what god, [259
Angry with men, hath sent this strange disease
Into the noblest minds? Madam, this grief
You add unto me is no more than drops
To seas, for which they are not seen to swell;
My lord hath struck his anger through my heart [268
And let out all the hope of future joys.
You need not bid me fly; I came to part,
To take my latest leave. Farewell for ever!
I durst not run away in honesty
From such a lady, like a boy that stole
Or made some grievous fault. The power of gods
Assist you in your sufferings! Hasty time
Reveal the truth to your abusëd lord
And mine, that he may know your worth; whilst I [281
Go seek out some forgotten place to die!
[*Exit.*

ARE. Peace guide thee! Thou hast overthrown me once;
Yet, if I had another Troy to lose,
Thou, or another villain with thy looks,
Might talk me out of it, and send me naked,
My hair dishevelled, through the [290 fiery streets.

Enter a LADY, *probably the one of I ii and II iii.*

LADY. Madam, the King would hunt, and calls for you
With earnestness.
ARE. I am in tune to hunt!
<Diana, if thou canst rage with a maid
As with a man, let me discover thee [299

Bathing, and turn me to a fearful hind,
That I may die pursued by cruel hounds,
And have my story written in my wounds!>

ACT FOUR

Scene I (B)

The King, Pharamond, Arethusa, Galatea, Megra, Dion, Cleremont, Thrasiline, *and Attendants are met in the court-yard of the palace, preparatory to setting out for the hunt.*

King. What, are the hounds before, and all the woodmen,
Our horses ready, and our bows bent?
Dion. All, sir.
King, *to* Pharamond. You are cloudy, sir: come, we have forgotten [11
Your venial trespass; let not that sit heavy
Upon your spirit; here's none dare utter it.

Dion, *to* Thrasiline. <He looks like an old surfeited stallion after his leaping, dull as a dormouse. See how he sinks! The wench has shot him between wind and water, and, I hope, sprung a leak. [20

Thras. He needs no teaching, he strikes sure enough: his greatest fault is, he hunts too much in the purlieus; would he would leave off poaching!

Dion. And, for his horn, h'as left it at the lodge where he lay late. Oh, he's a precious lymehound! turn him loose upon the pursuit of a lady, and, if he lose her, hang him up i' the slip. When my fox-bitch Beauty grows proud,[1] I'll borrow him.> [31

King, *to* Arethusa. <Is your boy turned away?
Are. You did command, sir,
And I obeyed you.
King. 'Tis well done. Hark ye further.> [*They talk apart.*

Cler., *speaking of* Pharamond. Is't possible this fellow should repent? methinks, that were not noble in him; and [40 yet he looks like a mortified member, as if he had a sick man's salve[2] in's mouth. If a worse man had done this fault now, some physical justice or other would presently (without the help of an almanack) have opened the obstructions of his liver, and let him blood with a dog-whip.

Dion, *referring to* Megra. See, see how modestly yon lady looks, as if she came from churching with her neighbors! [51 Why, what a devil can a man see in her face but that she's honest?

Thras. Faith, no great matter to speak of; a foolish twinkling with the eye, that spoils her coat; but he must be a cunning herald that finds it.

Dion. See how they muster one another! Oh, there's a rank regiment where the devil carries the colors and his dam drum-major! now the world and the flesh come behind with the carriage.[3] [62

Cler. Sure this lady has a good turn done her against her will; before, she was common talk; now, none dare say cantharides can stir her. Her face looks like a warrant, willing and commanding all tongues, as they will answer it, to be tied up and bolted when this lady means to let herself loose. As I live, she has got [70 her a goodly protection and a gracious; and may use her body discreetly for her health's sake, once a week, excepting Lent and dog-days. Oh, if they were to be got for money, what a great sum would come out of the city for these licences!

King. To horse, to horse! we lose the morning, gentlemen. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II (B)

Two Woodmen *meet in the forest, a little later on the same morning.*

1 Wood. What, have you lodged the deer?

2 Wood. Yes, they are ready for the bow.

1 Wood. Who shoots?

2 Wood. The princess.

1 Wood. No, she'll hunt.

[1] in heat.

[2] An allusion to a work by Thomas Bacon entitled "The Sicke Man's Salve," first printed in 1561.

[3] baggage.

2 Wood. She'll take a stand, I say. [10
1 Wood. Who else?
2 Wood. Why, the young stranger-prince.
1 Wood. He shall shoot in a stone-bow [4] for me. I never loved his beyond-sea-ship since he forsook the say,[5] for[6] paying ten shillings. He was there at the fall of a deer, and would needs (out of his mightiness) give ten groats for the dowcets; marry, his steward would have the velvet-head[7] into the bargain, to [21 turf[8] his hat withal. I think he should love venery; he is an old Sir Tristram; for, if you be remembered, he forsook the stag once to strike a rascal miching[9] in a meadow, and her he killed in the eye. Who shoots else?
2 Wood. The Lady Galatea.
1 Wood. That's a good wench, an she would not chide us for tumbling of her women in the brakes. She's liberal, and [31 by the gods, they say she's honest; and whether that be a fault, I have nothing to do. There's all?
2 Wood. No, one more; Megra.
1 Wood. That's a firker i' faith, boy; there's a wench will ride her haunches as hard after a kennel of hounds as a hunting saddle, and when she comes home, get 'em clapt, and all is well again. I [40 have known her lose herself three times in one afternoon (if the woods have been answerable), and it has been work enough for one man to find her, and he has sweat for it. She rides well, and she pays well. Hark! let's go. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III (B)

Soon afterwards, we have Philaster *alone in another part of the forest.*

Phil. Oh, that I had been nourished in these woods
With milk of goats and acorns, and not known
The right of crowns nor the dissembling trains
Of women's looks; but digged myself a cave, [10
Where I, my fire, my cattle, and my bed,
Might have been shut together in one shed;
And then had taken me some mountain-girl,
Beaten with winds, chaste as the hardened rocks
Whereon she dwelt, that might have strewed my bed
With leaves and reeds, and with the skins of beasts, [21
Our neighbors, and have borne at her big breasts
My large coarse issue! This had been a life
Free from vexation.

Enter Bellario.

Bel. <Oh, wicked men!
An innocent may walk safe among beasts;
Nothing assaults me here. See, my grieved lord [31
Sits as his soul were searching out a way
To leave his body!> Pardon me, that must
Break thy last commandment; for I must speak:
You that are grieved can pity; hear, my lord!
Phil. Is there a creature yet so miserable, [40
That I can pity?
Bel. Oh, my noble lord,
View my strange fortune, and bestow on me,
According to your bounty (if my service
Can merit nothing), so much as may serve
To keep that little piece I hold of life
From cold and hunger!
Phil. Is it thou? begone! [50
Go, sell those misbeseeming clothes thou wear'st,
And feed thyself with them.
Bel. Alas, my lord, I can get nothing for them!
The silly country-people think 'tis treason
To touch such gay things.

[4] a cross-bow for shooting stones.
[5] the cutting open of the deer.
[6] for fear of.
[7] the hart's horns.
[8] re-cover.
[9] moving stealthily.

PHIL. Now, by the gods, this is
Unkindly done, to vex me with thy sight.
Thou'rt fallen again to thy dissembling trade. [62
How shouldst thou think to cozen me again?
Remains there yet a plague untried for me?
Even so thou wept'st, and looked'st, and spok'st
When first I took thee up:
Curse on the time! If thy commanding tears [71
Can work on any other, use thy art;
I'll not betray it. Which way wilt thou take,
That I may shun thee? for thine eyes are poison
To mine, and I am loath to grow in rage:
This way, or that way?
BEL. Any will serve; but I will choose to have [80
That path in chase that leads unto my grave. [*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE IV (B)

ARETHUSA *is missing, to the consternation of the* KING *and the Courtiers.* DION, *searching for her, meets the two* WOODMEN *in another part of the forest.*

DION. This is the strangest sudden chance! You, woodman!

1 WOOD. My Lord Dion?

DION. Saw you a lady come this way on a sable horse studded with stars of white? [10

2 WOOD. Was she not young and tall?

DION. Yes. Rode she to the wood or to the plain?

2 WOOD. Faith, my lord, we saw none.

DION. Pox of your questions then!

[*Exeunt* WOODMEN.

Enter CLEREMONT.

What, is she found?

CLER. Nor will be, I think. [19

DION. Let him seek his daughter himself. She cannot stray about a little necessary natural business but the whole court must be in arms: when she has done, we shall have peace.

CLER. There's already a thousand fatherless tales amongst us. Some say, her horse ran away with her; some, a wolf pursued her; others, 'twas a plot to kill her, and that armed men were seen in the wood: but questionless she rode away willingly. [31

Enter KING, THRASILINE, *and Attendants.*

KING. Where is she?

CLER. Sir, I cannot tell.

KING. How's that?
Answer me so again!

CLER. Sir, shall I lie?

KING. Yes, lie and damn, rather than tell me that. [40
I say again, where is she? Mutter not!—
Sir, speak you; where is she?

DION. Sir, I do not know.

KING. Speak that again so boldly, and, by Heaven,
It is thy last!—You, fellows, answer me;
Where is she? Mark me, all; I am your King:
I wish to see my daughter; show her me;
I do command you all, as you are subjects, [51
To show her me!—What! am I not your King?
If ay, then am I not to be obeyed?

DION. Yes, if you command things possible and honest.

KING. Things possible and honest! Hear me, thou,
Thou traitor, that dar'st confine thy King to things [60
Possible and honest! show her me,
Or, let me perish, if I cover not
All Sicily with blood!

DION. Faith, I cannot,
Unless you tell me where she is.

KING. You have betrayed me; you have let me lose
The jewel of my life. Go, bring her [me], [69
And set her here before me: 'tis the King
Will have it so; whose breath can still the winds,
Uncloud the sun, charm down the swelling sea,

And stop the floods of heaven. Speak, can it not?
DION. No.
KING. No? cannot the breath of kings do this?
DION. No; nor smell sweet itself, if once the lungs [81
Be but corrupted.
KING. Is it so? Take heed!
DION. Sir, take you heed how you dare the powers
That must be just.
KING. Alas! what are we kings?
Why do you gods place us above the rest,
To be served, flattered, and adored, till [90 we
Believe we hold within our hands your thunder,
And when we come to try the power we have,
There's not a leaf shakes at our threatenings?
I have sinned, 'tis true, and here stand to be punished;
Yet would not thus be punished: let [100 me choose
My way, and lay it on!
DION. <He articles with the gods. Would somebody would draw bonds for the performance of covenants betwixt them!>

Enter PHARAMOND, GALATEA, *and* MEGRA.

KING. What, is she found?
PHAR. No; we have ta'en her horse;
He galloped empty by. There's some treason.— [111
You, Galatea, rode with her into the wood;
Why left you her?
GAL. She did command me.
KING. Command! you should not.
GAL. 'Twould ill become my fortunes and my birth
To disobey the daughter of my King.
KING. You're all cunning to obey us for our hurt; [121
But I will have her.
PHAR. If I have her not,
By this hand, there shall be no more Sicily.
DION. <What, will he carry it to Spain in's pocket?>
PHAR. I will not leave one man alive, but the King,
A cook, and a tailor. [130
DION. <Yet you may do well to spare your lady-bedfellow; and her you may keep for a spawner.>
KING. <I see
The injuries I have done must be revenged.>
DION. Sir, this is not the way to find her out.
KING. Run all, disperse yourselves. The man that finds her, [140
Or (if she be killed), the traitor, I'll make him great.
DION. <I know some would give five thousand pounds to find her.>
PHAR. Come, let us seek.
KING. Each man a several way; Here I myself.
DION. Come, gentlemen, we here.
CLER. Lady, you must go search too.
MEG. I had rather be searched myself.
[*Exeunt severally.* [151

SCENE V (B)

ARETHUSA, *wandering about in the forest, has come to realize that she has lost her way.*

ARE. Where am I now? Feet, find me out a way,
Without the counsel of my troubled head:
I'll follow you boldly about these woods,
O'er mountains, thorough brambles, pits, and floods. [10
Heaven, I hope, will ease me: I am sick.
[*Sits down.*

Enter BELLARIO.

BEL. Yonder's my lady. Heaven knows I want
Nothing, because I do not wish to live;
Yet I will try her charity.—Oh hear,
You that have plenty! from that flowing store [19
Drop some on dry ground.—See, the lively red

Is gone to guard her heart! I fear she faints.—
Madam! look up!—She breathes not.—Open once more
Those rosy twins, and send unto my lord
Your latest farewell!—Oh, she stirs.—How is it,
Madam? speak comfort.
ARE. 'Tis not gently done,
To put me in a miserable life,
And hold me there: I prithee, let me go;
I shall do best without thee; I am well.

Enter PHILASTER.

PHIL. <I am to blame to be so much in rage:
I'll tell her coolly when and where I heard
This killing truth. I will be temperate
In speaking, and as just in hearing.—
Oh, monstrous! Tempt me not, ye gods! good gods,
Tempt not a frail man! What's he, that has a heart,
But he must ease it here!>
BEL. My lord, help, help!
The princess!
ARE. I am well: forbear.
PHIL. <Let me love lightning, let me be embraced
And kissed by scorpions, or adore the eyes
Of basilisks, rather than trust the tongues
Of hell-bred women! Some good god look down,
And shrink these veins up; stick me here a stone,
Lasting to ages in the memory
Of this damned act!> Hear me, you wicked ones!
You have put hills of fire into this breast,
Not to be quenched with tears; for which may guilt
Sit on your bosoms! at your meals and beds
Despair await you! What, before my face?
Poison of asps between your lips! diseases
Be your best issues! Nature make a curse,
And throw it on you!

ARE. Dear Philaster, leave
To be enraged, and hear me.
PHIL. I have done;
Forgive my passion. Not the calmëd sea,
When Æolus locks up his windy brood,
Is less disturbed than I; I'll make you know it.
Dear Arethusa, do but take this sword,
[*Offers his drawn sword.*
And search how temperate a heart I have;
Then you and this your boy may live and reign
In lust without control.—Wilt thou, Bellario?
I prithee kill me; thou art poor, and may'st
Nourish ambitious thoughts; when I am dead,
Thy way were freer. Am I raging now?
If I were mad, I should desire to live.
Sirs, feel my pulse, whether you have known
A man in a more equal tune to die.
BEL. Alas, my lord, your pulse keeps madman's time!
So does your tongue.
PHIL. You will not kill me, then?
ARE. Kill you!
BEL. Not for the world!
PHIL. I blame not thee,
Bellario: thou hast done but that which gods
Would have transformed themselves to do. Be gone,
Leave me without reply; this is the last
Of all our meetings.—[*Exit* BELLARIO.]
Kill me with this sword;
Be wise, or worse will follow: we are two
Earth cannot bear at once. Resolve to do,
Or suffer.
ARE. If my fortune be so good to let me fall
Upon thy hand, I shall have peace in death.
Yet tell me this, will there be no slanders,
No jealousy in the other world? no ill there?
PHIL. No.

ARE. Show me, then, the way.
PHIL. Then guide my feeble hand,
You that have power to do it, for I must
Perform a piece of justice!—If your youth
Have any way offended Heaven, let prayers
Short and effectual reconcile you to it. [130
ARE. I am prepared.

As he stands over her with his sword drawn, giving her time for prayer, and yet reluctant to strike, a COUNTRY FELLOW *enters.*

CO. FEL. <I'll see the King, if he be in the forest; I have hunted him these two hours; if I should come home and not see him, my sisters would laugh at me. I can see nothing but people, better [140 horsed than myself, that out-ride me; I can hear nothing but shouting. These kings had need of good brains; this whooping is able to put a mean man out of his wits. There's a courtier with his sword drawn; by this hand, upon a woman, I think!>
PHIL. Are you at peace?
ARE. With heaven and earth.
PHIL. May they [150
Divide thy soul and body! [*Delivers his blow half-heartedly, only wounding her.*
CO. FEL. Hold, dastard! strike a woman! Thou'rt a craven, I warrant thee: thou wouldst be loth to play half a dozen venies at wasters[10] with a good fellow for a broken head.
PHIL. Leave us, good friend.
ARE. What ill-bred man art thou, to intrude thyself [161
Upon our private sports, our recreations?
CO. FEL. God 'uds me, I understand you not; but I know the rogue has hurt you.
PHIL. Pursue thy own affairs: it will be ill
To multiply blood upon my head; which thou [170
Wilt force me to.

[10] wooden swords.

CO. FEL. I know not your rhetoric; but I can lay it on, if you touch the woman.
PHIL. Slave, take what thou deservest. [*They fight.*
ARE. Heavens guard my lord!
CO. FEL. Oh, do you breathe?
PHIL. <I hear the tread of people. I am hurt: [180
The gods take part against me: could this boor
Have held me thus else? I must shift for life,
Though I do loathe it. I would find a course
To lose it rather by my will than force.> [*Exit.*
CO. FEL. I cannot follow the rogue. I pray thee, wench, come and kiss me [190 now.

Enter PHARAMOND, DION, CLEREMONT, THRASILINE, *and* WOODMEN.

PHAR. What art thou?
CO. FEL. Almost killed I am for a foolish woman; a knave has hurt her.
PHAR. The princess, gentlemen!—
Where's the wound, madam? Is it dangerous?
ARE. He has not hurt me. [200
CO. FEL. By God, she lies; h'as hurt her in the breast; look else.
PHAR. O, sacred spring of innocent blood!
DION. 'Tis above wonder! who should dare this?
ARE. I felt it not.
PHAR. Speak, villain, who has hurt the princess?
CO. FEL. Is it the princess? [210
DION. Ay.
CO. FEL. Then I have seen something yet.
PHAR. But who has hurt her?
CO. FEL. I told you, a rogue; I ne'er saw him before, I.
PHAR. Madam, who did it?
ARE. Some dishonest wretch;
Alas, I know him not, and do forgive him! [220
CO. FEL. He's hurt too; he cannot

go far; I made my father's old fox[11] fly about his ears.

PHAR. How will you have me kill him?

ARE. Not at all;
'Tis some distracted fellow.

PHAR. By this hand,
I'll leave ne'er a piece of him bigger than a nut,
And bring him all to you in my hat. [230

ARE. Nay, good sir,
If you do take him, bring him quick[12] to me,
And I will study for a punishment
Great as his fault.

PHAR. I will.

ARE. But swear.

PHAR. By all my love, I will.— [238
Woodmen, conduct the princess to the King, and bear that wounded fellow to dressing.—Come, gentlemen, we'll follow the chase close. [*Exeunt on one side* PHARAMOND, DION, CLEREMONT, *and* THRASILINE; *exit on the other* ARETHUSA *attended by the* FIRST WOODMAN.

CO. FEL. I pray you, friend, let me see the King.

2 WOOD. That you shall, and receive thanks. [250

CO. FEL. If I get clear of this, I'll go see no more gay sights. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VI (B)

We are still in the forest, but in another part of it. BELLARIO *is alone, weary and dispirited.*

BEL. A heaviness near death sits on my brow,
And I must sleep. Bear me, thou gentle bank,
For ever, if thou wilt. You sweet ones all, [*Lies down.* [9
Let me unworthy press you: I could wish
I rather were a corse strewed o'er with you
Than quick above you. Dullness shuts mine eyes
And I am giddy: oh, that I could take
So sound a sleep that I might never wake! [*Sleeps.*

Enter PHILASTER.

PHIL. I have done ill; my conscience calls me false, [20
To strike at her that would not strike at me.
When I did fight, methought I heard her pray
The gods to guard me. She may be abused,
And I a loathëd villain: if she be,
She will conceal who hurt her. He has wounds [29
And cannot follow; neither knows he me.
Who's this? Bellario sleeping! If thou be'st
Guilty, there is no justice that thy sleep
Should be so sound, and mine, whom thou hast wronged, [*Cry within.*
So broken. Hark! I am pursued. You gods,
I'll take this offered means of my escape:
They have no mark to know me but my blood, [40
If she be true; if false, let mischief light
On all the world at once! Sword, print my wounds
Upon this sleeping boy! I ha' none, I think,
Are mortal, nor would I lay greater on thee. [*Wounds* BELLARIO.

BEL. Oh, death, I hope, is come! Blest be that hand!
It meant me well. Again, for pity's sake! [51

PHIL. I have caught myself; [*Falls.*
The loss of blood hath stayed my flight. Here, here,
Is he that struck thee: take thy full revenge;
Use me, as I did mean thee, worse than death;
I'll teach thee to revenge. This luckless hand [60
Wounded the princess; tell my followers[13]
Thou didst receive these hurts in staying me,
And I will second thee; get a reward.

BEL. Fly, fly, my lord, and save yourself!

[11] broadsword.
[12] alive.
[13] pursuers.

PHIL. How's this?
Wouldst thou I should be safe?
BEL. Else were it vain
For me to live. These little wounds I have
Ha' not bled much: reach me that noble hand;
I'll help to cover you.
PHIL. Art thou true to me?
BEL. Or let me perish loathed! Come, my good lord,
Creep in amongst those bushes: who does know
But that the gods may save your much-loved breath?
PHIL. Then I shall die for grief, if not for this,
That I have wounded thee. What wilt thou do?
BEL. Shift for myself well. Peace! I hear 'em come. [PHILASTER *creeps into a bush.*
VOICES, *within.* Follow, follow, follow! that way they went.
BEL. With my own wounds I'll bloody my own sword.
I need not counterfeit to fall; Heaven knows
That I can stand no longer. [*Falls.*

Enter PHARAMOND, DION, CLEREMONT, *and* THRASILINE.

PHAR. To this place we have tracked him by his blood.
CLER. Yonder, my lord, creeps one away.
DION. Stay, sir! what are you?
BEL. A wretched creature, wounded in these woods
By beasts: relieve me, if your names be men,
Or I shall perish.
DION. This is he, my lord,
Upon my soul, that hurt her; 'tis the boy,
That wicked boy, that served her.
PHAR. Oh, thou damned
In thy creation! what cause couldst thou shape
To hurt the princess?
BEL. Then I am betrayed.
DION. Betrayed! no, apprehended.
BEL. I confess,
(Urge it no more) that, big with evil thoughts,
I set upon her, and did make my aim
Her death. For charity let fall at once
The punishment you mean, and do not load
This weary flesh with tortures.
PHAR. I will know
Who hired thee to this deed.
BEL. Mine own revenge.
PHAR. Revenge! for what?
BEL. It pleased her to receive
Me as her page, and, when my fortunes ebbed,
That men strid o'er them careless, she did shower
Her welcome graces on me, and did swell
My fortunes till they overflowed their banks,
Threatening the men that crossed 'em; when, as swift
As storms arise at sea, she turned her eyes
To burning suns upon me, and did dry
The streams she had bestowed, leaving me worse
And more contemned than other little brooks,
Because I had been great. In short, I knew
I could not live, and therefore did desire
To die revenged.
PHAR. If tortures can be found
Long as thy natural life, resolve to feel
The utmost rigor.
CLER. Help to lead him hence.
[PHILASTER *creeps out of the bush.*
PHIL. Turn back, you ravishers of innocence!
Know ye the price of that you bear away
So rudely?
PHAR. Who's that?
DION. 'Tis the Lord Philaster.
PHIL. 'Tis not the treasure of all kings in one.
The wealth of Tagus, nor the rocks of pearl

That pave the court of Neptune, can weigh down
That virtue. It was I that hurt the princess. [171
Place me, some god, upon a pyramis
Higher than hills of earth, and lend a voice
Loud as your thunder to me, that from thence
I may discourse to all the under-world
The worth that dwells in him!
PHAR. How's this?
BEL. My lord, some man weary of life, [181
That would be glad to die.
PHIL. Leave these untimely courtesies, Bellario.
BEL. Alas, he's mad! Come, will you lead me on?
PHIL. By all the oaths that men ought most to keep,
And gods do punish most when men do break, [190
He touched her not.—Take heed, Bellario,
How thou dost drown the virtues thou hast shown
With perjury.—By all the gods, 'twas I!
You know she stood betwixt me and my right.
PHAR. Thy own tongue be thy judge!
CLER. It was Philaster.
DION. Is't not a brave boy? [200
Well, sirs, I fear me we were all deceived.
PHIL. Have I no friend here?
DION. Yes.
PHIL. Then show it: some
Good body lend a hand to draw us nearer.
Would you have tears shed for you when you die?
Then lay me gently on his neck, that there [210
I may weep floods and breathe forth my spirit.
'Tis not the wealth of Plutus, nor the gold [*Embraces* BELLARIO.
Locked in the heart of earth, can buy away
This armful from me: this had been a ransom
To have redeemed the great Augustus Cæsar, [220
Had he been taken. You hard-hearted men,
More stony than these mountains, can you see
Such clear pure blood drop, and not cut your flesh
To stop his life? to bind whose bitter wounds,
Queens ought to tear their hair, and with their tears [230
Bathe 'em.—Forgive me, thou that art the wealth
Of poor Philaster!

Enter KING, ARETHUSA, *and Guard.*

KING. Is the villain ta'en?
PHAR. Sir, here be two confess the deed; but sure
It was Philaster.
PHIL. Question it no more;
It was. [240
KING. The fellow that did fight with him,
Will tell us that.
ARE. Ay me! I know he will.
KING. Did not you know him?
ARE. Sir, if it was he,
He was disguised.
PHIL. <I was so. Oh, my stars,
That I should live still.> [249
KING. Thou ambitious fool,
Thou that hast laid a train for thy own life,
Now I do mean to do, I'll leave to talk.
Bear them to prison.
ARE. Sir, they did plot together to take hence
This harmless life; should it pass unrevenged,
I should to earth go weeping: grant me, then, [260
By all the love a father bears his child,
Their custodies, and that I may appoint
Their tortures and their deaths.
DION. <Death! Soft; our law
Will not reach that for this fault.>
KING. 'Tis granted; take 'em to you with a guard.—
Come, princely Pharamond, this business past,

We may with more security go on
To your intended match. [*Exeunt all except* DION, CLEREMONT, *and* THRASILINE.

CLER. I pray that this action lose not Philaster the hearts of the people.

DION. Fear it not; their over-wise heads will think it but a trick.

ACT FIVE

SCENE I (B)

The KING, *feeling sure of his daughter's sentence on* PHILASTER, *has sent for the headsman. On the afternoon of the same day* DION, CLEREMONT, *and* THRASILINE *meet in front of the palace.*

THRA. Has the King sent for him to death?

DION. Yes; but the King must know 'tis not in his power to war with Heaven.

CLER. We linger time; the King sent for Philaster and the headsman an hour ago.

THRA. Are all his wounds well?

DION. All; they were but scratches; but the loss of blood made him faint.

CLER. We dally, gentlemen.

THRA. Away!

DION. We'll scuffle hard before he perish. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II (B)

The prison to which PHILASTER *and* BELLARIO *have been taken.* ARETHUSA *is visiting them.*

ARE. Nay, faith, Philaster, grieve not; we are well.

BEL. Nay, good my lord, forbear; we are wondrous well.

PHIL. Oh, Arethusa, oh, Bellario,
Leave to be kind!
I shall be shut from Heaven, as now from earth,
If you continue so. I am a man
False to a pair of the most trusty ones
That ever earth bore: can it bear us all?
Forgive, and leave me. But the King hath sent
To call me to my death: oh, show it me,
And then forget me! and, for thee, my boy,
I shall deliver words will mollify
The hearts of beasts to spare thy innocence.

BEL. Alas, my lord, my life is not a thing
Worthy your noble thoughts! 'tis not a life,
'Tis but a piece of childhood thrown away.
Should I outlive you, I should then outlive
Virtue and honor; and when that day comes,
If ever I shall close these eyes but once,
May I live spotted for my perjury,
And waste my limbs to nothing!

ARE. And I (the woeful'st maid that ever was,
Forced with my hands to bring my lord to death)
Do by the honor of a virgin swear
To tell no hours beyond it!

PHIL. Make me not hated so.

ARE. Come from this prison all joyful to our deaths!

PHIL. People will tear me, when they find you true
To such a wretch as I; I shall die loathed.
Enjoy your kingdoms peaceably, whilst I
For ever sleep forgotten with my faults:
Every just servant,[1] every maid in love,
Will have a piece of me, if you be true.

ARE. My dear lord, say not so.

BEL. A piece of you!
He was not born of woman that can cut
It and look on.

PHIL. Take me in tears betwixt you, for my heart
Will break with shame and sorrow.

ARE. Why, 'tis well.

BEL. Lament no more.

PHIL. Why, what would you have done
If you had wronged me basely, and had found
Your life no price compared to mine? for love, sirs,
Deal with me truly.

BEL. 'Twas mistaken, sir.

PHIL. Why, if it were?

[1] lover.

BEL. Then, sir, we would have asked
You pardon.
PHIL. And have hope to enjoy it?
ARE. Enjoy it! ay.
PHIL. Would you indeed? be plain.
BEL. We would, my lord.
PHIL. Forgive me, then.
ARE. So, so.
BEL. 'Tis as it should be now. [80
PHIL. Lead to my death. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III (F)

The KING *is in his state-room, with* DION, CLEREMONT, THRASILINE, *and Attendants. He is awaiting the bringing of* PHILASTER.

KING. Gentlemen, who saw the prince?
CLER. So please you, sir, he's gone to see the city
And the new platform, with some gentlemen
Attending on him. [10
KING. Is the princess ready
To bring her prisoner out?
THRA. She waits your grace.
KING. Tell her we stay. [*Exit* THRASILINE.
DION. <King, you may be deceived yet:
The head you aim at cost more setting on [19
Than to be lost so lightly. If it must off;
Like a wild overflow, that swoops before him
A golden stack, and with it shakes down bridges,
Cracks the strong hearts of pines, whose cable-roots
Held out a thousand storms, a thousand thunders;
And, so made mightier, takes whole villages [30
Upon his back, and in that heat of pride
Charges strong towns, towers, castles, palaces,
And lays them desolate; so shall thy head,
Thy noble head, bury the lives of thousands,
That must bleed with thee like a sacrifice,
In thy red ruins.> [40

THRASILINE *returns, with* ARETHUSA, PHILASTER, *and* BELLARIO, *the last-named being in a robe and garland.* ARETHUSA'S *vengeance upon* PHILASTER *has not been in accordance with her father's anticipations; she has married him.*

KING. How now? what masque is this?
BEL. Right royal sir, I should [49
Sing you an epithalamium of these lovers,
But having lost my best airs with my fortunes,
And wanting a celestial harp to strike
This blessëd union on, thus in glad story
I give you all. These two fair cedar-branches,
The noblest of the mountain where they grew
Straightest and tallest, under whose still shades [60
The worthier beasts have made their lairs, and slept
Free from the fervor of the Sirian star
And the fell thunder-stroke, free from the clouds,
When they were big with humor, and delivered
In thousand spouts their issues to the earth; [69
Oh, there was none but silent quiet there!
Till never-pleasëd Fortune shot up shrubs,
Base under-brambles, to divorce these branches;
And for a while they did so, and did reign
Over the mountain, and choke up his beauty
With brakes, rude thorns and thistles, till the sun [80
Scorched them even to the roots and dried them there;
And now a gentle gale hath blown again,
That made these branches meet and twine together,
Never to be divided. The god that sings
His holy numbers over marriage-beds

Hath knit their noble hearts; and here they stand,
Your children, mighty King: and I have done.
KING. How, how?
ARE. Sir, if you love it in plain truth
(For now there is no masquing in't), this gentleman,
The prisoner that you gave me, is become
My keeper, and through all the bitter throes
Your jealousies and his ill fate have wrought him,
Thus nobly hath he struggled, and at length
Arrived here my dear husband.
KING. Your dear husband!—
Call in the Captain of the Citadel.—
There you shall keep your wedding. I'll provide
A masque shall make your Hymen turn his saffron
Into a sullen coat, and sing sad requiems
To your departing souls;
Blood shall put out your torches; and, instead
Of gaudy flowers about your wanton necks,
An axe shall hang like a prodigious meteor,
Ready to crop your loves' sweets.—Hear, you gods!
From this time do I shake all title off
Of father to this woman, this base woman;
And what there is of vengeance in a lion
Chased[2] among dogs or robbed of his dear young,
The same, enforced more terrible, more mighty,
Expect from me!
ARE. Sir, by that little life I have left to swear by,
There's nothing that can stir me from myself.
What I have done, I have done without repentance,
For death can be no bugbear unto me,
So long as Pharamond is not my headsman.
DION. <Sweet peace upon thy soul, thou worthy maid,
Whene'er thou diest! For this time I'll excuse thee,
Or be thy prologue.>
PHIL. Sir, let me speak next;
And let my dying words be better with you
Than my dull living actions. If you aim
At the dear life of this sweet innocent,
You are a tyrant and a savage monster,
That feeds upon the blood you gave a life to;
Your memory shall be as foul behind you,
As you are living; all your better deeds
Shall be in water writ, but this in marble;
No chronicle shall speak you, though your own,
But for the shame of men. No monument,
Though high and big as Pelion, shall be able
To cover this base murder; make it rich
With brass, with purest gold and shining jasper,
Like the Pyramids; lay on epitaphs
Such as make great men gods: my little marble
That only clothes my ashes, not my faults,
Shall far outshine it. And, for after-issues,
Think not so madly of the heavenly wisdoms,
That they will give you more for your mad rage
To cut off, unless it be some snake, or something
Like yourself, that in his birth shall strangle you.
Remember my father, King! there was a fault;
But I forgive it: let that sin persuade you
To love this lady; if you have a soul,
Think, save her, and be saved. For myself,
I have so long expected this glad hour,

[2] Q1, chafed.

So languished under you, and daily withered,
That, by the gods, it is a joy to die;
I find a recreation in't.

Enter a MESSENGER.

MES. Where is the King?
KING. Here.
MES. Get you to your strength,
And rescue the Prince Pharamond from danger;
He's taken prisoner by the citizens,
Fearing[3] the Lord Philaster.
DION. <Oh, brave fellows!
Mutiny, my fine dear countrymen, mutiny!
Now, my brave valiant foremen, show your weapons
In honor of your mistresses!>

Enter a Second MESSENGER.

2 MES. Arm, arm, arm, arm!
KING. A thousand devils take 'em!
DION. <A thousand blessings on 'em!>
2 MES. Arm, O King! The city is in mutiny,
Led by an old grey ruffian, who comes on
In rescue of the Lord Philaster.
KING. Away to the citadel! I'll see them safe,
And then cope with these burghers. Let the guard
And all the gentlemen give strong attendance. [*Exeunt all except* DION, CLEREMONT, *and* THRASILINE.
CLER. The city up! this was above our wishes.
DION. Ay, and the marriage too. By my life,
This noble lady has deceived us all.
A plague upon myself, a thousand plagues,
For having such unworthy thoughts of her dear honor!
Oh, I could beat myself! or do you beat me,
And I'll beat you; for we had all one thought.
CLER. No, no, 'twill but lose time.

[3] fearing for.

DION. You say true. Are your swords sharp?—Well, my dear countrymen What-ye-lacks,[4] if you continue, and fall not back upon the first broken shin, I'll have you chronicled and chronicled, and cut[5] and chronicled, and all-to-be-praised and sung in sonnets, and bawled in new brave ballads, that all tongues shall trowl you *in saecula saeculorum*, my kind can-carriers.

THRA. What, if a toy[6] take 'em i' th' heels now, and they run all away, and cry, "the devil take the hindmost"?

DION. Then the same devil take the foremost too, and souse him for his breakfast! If they all prove cowards, my curses fly amongst them, and be speeding! May they have murrains reign to keep the gentlemen at home unbound in easy frieze! may the moths branch their velvets, and their silks only be worn before sore eyes! may their false lights undo 'em, and discover presses,[7] holes, stains, and oldness in their stuffs, and make them shop-rid! may they keep whores and horses, and break[8]; and live mewed up with necks of beef and turnips! may they have many children, and none like the father! may they know no language but that gibberish they prattle to their parcels, unless it be the goatish Latin they write in their bonds—and may they write that false, and lose their debts!

Re-enter KING.

KING. Now the vengeance of all the gods confound them! How they swarm together! what a hum they raise!—Devils choke your wild throats!—If a man had need to use their valors, he must pay a brokage for it, and then bring 'em on, and they will fight like sheep. 'Tis Philaster, none but Philaster, must allay this heat: they will not hear me speak, but fling dirt at me and call me tyrant.—[*To* CLEREMONT.] Oh, run, dear friend, and bring the Lord Philaster! speak him

[4] shopkeepers. [5] engraved.
[6] whim. [7] creases.
[8] be bankrupt.

fair; call him prince; do him all the courtesy you can; commend me to him. —Oh, my wits, my wits! [*Exit* Cleremont.

Dion. <Oh, my brave countrymen! as I live, I will not buy a pin out of your walls for this; nay, you shall cozen [290 me and I'll thank you, and send you brawn and bacon, and soil[9] you every long vacation a brace of foremen,[10] that at Michaelmas shall come up fat and kicking.>

King. What they will do with this poor prince the gods know, and I fear.

Dion. Why, sir, they'll flay him, and make church-buckets on's skin, to quench rebellion; then clap a rivet in's sconce, and hang him up for a sign. [301

Cleremont *returns, ushering in* Philaster.

King. Oh, worthy sir, forgive me! do not make
Your miseries and my faults meet together,
To bring a greater danger. Be yourself,
Still sound amongst diseases. I have wronged you; [310
And, though I find it last, and beaten to it,
Let first your goodness know it. Calm the people,
And be what you were born to: take your love,
And with her my repentance, all my wishes,
And all my prayers. By the gods, my heart speaks this; [320
And if the least fall from me not performed,
May I be struck with thunder!

Phil. Mighty sir,
I will not do your greatness so much wrong,
As not to make your word truth. Free the princess
And the poor boy, and let me stand the shock [330
Of this mad sea-breach, which I'll either turn,
Or perish with it.

King. Let your own word free them.

Phil. Then thus I take my leave, kissing your hand,
And hanging on your royal word. Be kingly,
And be not moved, sir: I shall bring you peace, [341
Or never bring myself back.

King. All the gods
Go with thee. [*Exit* Philaster.

[9] fatten for
[10] geese.

Scene IV (F)

In one of the city streets, the citizens, headed by an old Captain, *are terrifying the captured* Pharamond *with the most fantastic and bloodthirsty threats of what they will do to him. It is late afternoon.*

Cap. Come, my brave myrmidons, let us fall on!
Let your caps swarm, my boys, and your nimble tongues [10
Forget your mother-gibberish of "What do you lack,"
And set your mouths ope, children, till your palates
Fall frighted half a fathom past the cure
Of bay-salt and gross pepper, and then cry
"Philaster, brave Philaster!" Let Philaster
Be deeper in request, my ding-dongs, [20
My pairs of dear indentures, kings of clubs,[11]
Than your cold water-camlets or your paintings
Spitted with copper. Let not your hasty silks,
Or your branched cloth of bodkin, or your tissues,
Dearly belovëd of spiced cake and custard, [30
Your Robin Hoods, Scarlets, and Johns, tie your affections
In durance to your shops. No, dainty duckers,[12]
Up with your three-piled spirits, your wrought valors;

[11] The club was the prentices' weapon.
[12] cringers.

And let your uncut cholers make the King feel
The measure of your mightiness. Philaster! [40
Cry, my rose-nobles, cry!
ALL. Philaster! Philaster!
CAP. How do you like this, my lord-prisoner?
These are mad boys, I tell you; these are things
That will not strike their top-sails to a foist,
And let a man-of-war, an argosy,
Hull [13] and cry cockles. [50
PHAR. Why, you rude slave, do you know what you do?
CAP. My pretty prince of puppets, we do know
And give your greatness warning that you talk
No more such bug's-words, or that soldered crown
Shall be scratched with a musket. Dear prince Pippin, [60
Down with your noble blood, or, as I live,
I'll have you coddled.[14]—Let him loose, my spirits:
Make us a round ring with your bills,[15] my Hectors,
And let us see what this trim man dares do.—
Now, sir, have at you! here I lie;
And with this swashing blow (do you see, sweet prince?) [71
I could hock your grace, and hang you up cross-legged,
Like a hare at a poulter's, and do this with this wiper.
PHAR. You will not see me murdered, wicked villains?
1 CIT. Yes, indeed, will we, sir; we have not seen one
For a great while. [80
CAP. He would have weapons, would he?
Give him a broadside, my brave boys, with your pikes;
Branch me his skin in flowers like a satin,
And between every flower a mortal cut.—
Your royalty shall ravel!—Jag him, gentlemen;
I'll have him cut to the kell,[16] then down the seams.— [90
Oh, for a whip to make him galloon-laces!
I'll have a coach-whip.
PHAR. Oh, spare me, gentlemen!
CAP. Hold, hold;
The man begins to fear and know himself;
He shall for this time only be seeled up,[17]
With a feather through his nose, that he may only [100
See heaven, and think whither he is going.
Nay, my beyond-sea sir, we will proclaim you:
You would be king!
Thou tender heir-apparent to a church-ale,[18]
Thou slight prince of single sarcenet,
Thou royal ring-tail, fit to fly at nothing
But poor men's poultry, and have every boy [111
Beat thee from that too with his bread and butter!
PHAR. Gods keep me from these hell-hounds!
1 CIT. Shall's geld him, captain?
CAP. No, you shall spare his dowcets, my dear donsels [19];
As you respect the ladies, let them flourish: [120
The curses of a longing woman kill
As speedy as a plague, boys.
1 CIT. I'll have a leg, that's certain.
2 CIT. I'll have an arm.
3 CIT. I'll have his nose, and at mine own charge build
A college, and clap't upon the gate.[20]
4 CIT. I'll have his little gut to string a kit [21] with:
For certainly a royal gut will sound like silver. [131

[13] Lie idle.
[14] boiled.
[15] pikes.
[16] the membrane enclosing the intestines.
[17] Have his eyes stitched up, as was done with a hawk to tame it.
[18] A parish merry-making.
[19] youths.
[20] an allusion to Brazenose College, Oxford.
[21] a small fiddle.

PHAR. Would they were in thy belly, and I past
My pain once!
5 CIT. Good captain, let me have his liver to feed ferrets.
CAP. Who will have parcels else? speak.
PHAR. Good gods, consider me! I shall be tortured. [140
1 CIT. Captain, I'll give you the trimming of your two-hand sword,
And let me have his skin to make false scabbards.
2 CIT. He had no horns, sir, had he?
CAP. No, sir, he's a pollard: What wouldst thou do with horns?
2 CIT. Oh, if he had had,
I would have made rare hafts and whistles of 'em; [150
But his shin-bones, if they be sound, shall serve me.

Enter PHILASTER.

ALL. Long live Philaster, the brave Prince Philaster!
PHIL. I thank you, gentlemen. But why are these
Rude weapons brought abroad, to teach your hands
Uncivil trades? [160
CAP. My royal Rosicleer,[22]
We are thy myrmidons, thy guard, thy roarers;
And when thy noble body is in durance,
Thus do we clap our musty murrions on,
And trace the streets in terror. Is it peace,
Thou Mars of men? is the King sociable,
And bids thee live? art thou above thy foemen, [170
And free as Phœbus? speak. If not, this stand
Of royal blood shall be abroach, a-tilt,
And run even to the lees of honor.
PHIL. Hold, and be satisfied: I am myself,
Free as my thoughts are: by the gods, I am!
CAP. Art thou the dainty darling of the King? [180
Art thou the Hylas to our Hercules?
Do the lords bow, and the regarded scarlets[23]
Kiss their gummed golls,[24] and cry, "We are your servants"?
Is the court navigable, and the presence stuck
With flags of friendship? If not, we are thy castle,
And this man sleeps. [190
PHIL. I am what I desire to be, your friend;
I am what I was born to be, your prince.
PHAR. Sir, there is some humanity in you;
You have a noble soul: forget my name,
And know my misery: set me safe aboard
From these wild cannibals, and, as I live,
I'll quit this land for ever. There is nothing,— [200
Perpetual prisonment, cold, hunger, sickness
Of all sorts, of all dangers, and all together,
The worst company of the worst men, madness, age,
To be as many creatures as a woman,
And do as all they do, nay, to despair—
But I would rather make it a new nature,
And live with all those, than endure one hour [211
Amongst these wild dogs.
PHIL. I do pity you.—
Friends, discharge your fears;
Deliver me the prince: I'll warrant you
I shall be old enough to find my safety.
3 CIT. Good sir, take heed he does not hurt you;
He is a fierce man, I can tell you, sir.
CAP. Prince, by your leave, I'll have a surcingle, [221
And make[25] you like a hawk.
PHIL. Away, away, there is no danger in him:
Alas, he had rather sleep to shake his fit off!
Look you, friends, how gently he leads! Upon my word,
He's tame enough, he needs no further watching. [230

[22] The hero of a Spanish romance, translated into English as "The Mirrour of Knighthood."
[23] men in uniforms.
[24] scented hands.
[25] train.

Good my friends, go to your houses,
And by me have your pardons and my love;
And know there shall be nothing in my power
You may deserve, but you shall have your wishes:
To give you more thanks were to flatter you.
Continue still your love; and, for an earnest,
Drink this. [*Gives money.*
ALL. Long mayst thou live, brave prince, brave prince, brave prince!
[*Exeunt* PHILASTER *and* PHARAMOND.
CAP. Go thy ways, thou art the king of courtesy!
Fall off again, my sweet youths. Come,
And every man trace to his house again,
And hang his pewter up; then to the tavern,
And bring your wives in muffs. We will have music;
And the red grape shall make us dance and rise, boys. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V (B)

It is the evening of the same day in a room in the palace. The KING *is accompanied by* ARETHUSA, GALATEA, MEGRA, DION, CLEREMONT, THRASILINE, BELLARIO, *and Attendants.*

KING. Is it appeased?
DION. Sir, all is quiet as this dead of night,
As peaceable as sleep. My lord Philaster
Brings on the prince himself.
KING. Kind gentleman!
I will not break the least word I have given
In promise to him: I have heaped a world
Of grief upon his head, which yet I hope
To wash away.

Enter PHILASTER *and* PHARAMOND.

CLER. My lord is come.
KING. My son!
Blest be the time that I have leave to call
Such virtue mine! Now thou art in mine arms,
Methinks I have a salve unto my breast
For all the stings that dwell there. Streams of grief
That I have wronged[26] thee, and as much of joy
That I repent it, issue from mine eyes:
Let them appease thee. Take thy right; take her;
She is thy right too; and forget to urge
My vexèd soul with that I did before.
PHIL. Sir, it is blotted from my memory,
Past and forgotten.—For you, prince of Spain,
Whom I have thus redeemed, you have full leave
To make an honorable voyage home.
And, if you would go furnished to your realm
With fair provision, I do see a lady,
Methinks, would gladly bear you company:
How like you this piece?
MEG. Sir, he likes it well,
For he hath tried it, and hath found it worth
His princely liking. We were ta'en a-bed;
I know your meaning. I am not the first
That nature taught to seek a fellow forth.
Can shame remain perpetually in me,
And not in others? or have princes salves
To cure ill names that meaner people want?
PHIL. What mean you?
MEG. You must get another ship,
To bear the princess and her boy together.
DION. <How now!>
MEG. Others took me, and I took her and him
At that all women may be ta'en some time:
Ship us all four, my lord; we can endure
Weather and wind alike.
KING. Clear thou thyself, or know not me for father.
ARE. This earth, how false it is! What means is left for me

[26] Qq, wrought (which may be correct).

To clear myself? It lies in your belief.—
My lords, believe me; and let all things else
Struggle together to dishonor me.
BEL. Oh, stop your ears, great King, that I may speak [81
As freedom would! then I will call this lady
As base as are her actions: hear me, sir;
Believe your heated blood when it rebels
Against your reason, sooner than this lady.
MEG. By this good light, he bears it handsomely.
PHIL. This lady! I will sooner trust the wind [91
With feathers, or the troubled sea with pearl,
Than her with any thing. Believe her not.
Why, think you, if I did believe her words,
I would outlive 'em?—Honor cannot take
Revenge on you; then what were to be known [100
But death?
KING. Forget her, sir, since all is knit
Between us. But I must request of you
One favor, and will sadly be denied.
PHIL. Command, whate'er it be.
KING. Swear to be true
To what you promise.
PHIL. By the powers above,
Let it not be the death of her or him,
And it is granted! [111
KING. Bear away that boy
To torture: I will have her cleared or buried.
PHIL. Oh, let me call my word back, worthy sir!
Ask something else: bury my life and right
In one poor grave; but do not take away
My life and fame at once. [120
KING. Away with him! It stands irrevocable.
PHIL. Turn all your eyes on me: here stands a man
The falsest and the basest of this world.
Set swords against this breast, some honest man,
For I have lived till I am pitied!
My former deeds were hateful; but this last [130
Is pitiful, for I unwillingly
Have given the dear preserver of my life
Unto his torture. Is it in the power
Of flesh and blood to carry this, and live? [*Offers to stab himself.*
ARE. Dear sir, be patient yet! Oh, stay that hand!
KING. Sirs, strip that boy.
DION. Come, sir; your tender flesh
Will try your constancy. [140
BEL. Oh, kill me, gentlemen!
DION. No.—Help, sirs.
BEL. Will you torture me?
KING. Haste there;
Why stay you?
BEL. Then I shall not break my vow,
You know, just gods, though I discover all.
KING. How's that? will he confess? [150
DION. Sir, so he says.
KING. Speak then.
BEL. Great King, if you command
This lord to talk with me alone, my tongue,
Urged by my heart, shall utter all the thoughts
My youth hath known; and stranger things than these
You hear not often. [160
KING. Walk aside with him.
[DION *and* BELLARIO *walk apart.*
DION. < Why speak'st thou not?
BEL. Know you this face, my lord?
DION. No.
BEL. Have you not seen it, nor the like?
DION. Yes, I have seen the like, but readily
I know not where. [170
BEL. I have been often told
In court of one Euphrasia, a lady,
And daughter to you; betwixt whom and me
They that would flatter my bad face would swear

There was such strange resemblance, that we two
Could not be known asunder, dressed alike.
DION. By Heaven, and so there is!
BEL. For her fair sake,
Who now doth spend the spring-time of her life
In holy pilgrimage, move to the King
That I may scape this torture.
DION. But thou speak'st
As like Euphrasia as thou dost look.
How came it to thy knowledge that she lives
In pilgrimage?
BEL. I know it not, my lord;
But I have heard it, and do scarce believe it.
DION. Oh, my shame! is it possible? Draw near,
That I may gaze upon thee. Art thou she,
Or else her murderer?[27] where wert thou born?
BEL. In Syracusa.
DION. What's thy name?
BEL. Euphrasia.
DION. Oh, 'tis just, 'tis she!
Now I do know thee. Oh, that thou hadst died,
And I had never seen thee nor my shame!
How shall I own thee? shall this tongue of mine
E'er call thee daughter more?
BEL. Would I had died indeed! I wish it too:
And so I must have done by vow, ere published
What I have told, but that there was no means
To hide it longer. Yet I joy in this,
The princess is all clear.>
KING. What, have you done?
DION. All is discovered.
PHIL. Why then hold you me?
[*Offers to stab himself.* CLEREMONT *and* THRASILINE *prevent him.*
All is discovered! Pray you, let me go.

KING. Stay him.
ARE. What is discovered?
DION. Why, my shame.
It is a woman: let her speak the rest.
PHIL. How? that again!
DION. It is a woman.
PHIL. Blessed be you powers that favor innocence!
KING. Lay hold upon that lady.
[MEGRA *is seized.*
PHIL. It is a woman, sir!—Hark, gentlemen,
It is a woman!—Arethusa, take
My soul into thy breast, that would be gone
With joy. It is a woman! Thou art fair,
And virtuous still to ages, in despite of malice.
KING. Speak you, where lies his shame?
BEL. I am his daughter.
PHIL. The gods are just.
DION. I dare accuse none; but, before you two,
The virtue of our age, I bend my knee
For mercy. [*Kneels.*
PHIL., *raising him.* Take it freely; for I know,
Though what thou didst were undiscreetly done,
'Twas meant well.
ARE. And for me, I have a power
To pardon sins as oft as any man
Has power to wrong me.
CLER. Noble and worthy!
PHIL. But, Bellario
(For I must call thee still so), tell me why
Thou didst conceal thy sex. It was a fault,
A fault, Bellario, though thy other deeds
Of truth outweighed it: all these jealousies
Had flown to nothing, if thou hadst discovered
What now we know.
BEL. My father oft would speak
Your worth and virtue; and, as I did grow
More and more apprehensive,[28] I did thirst

[27] It was the received opinion in some barbarous countries that the murderer inherited the qualities and shape of his victim.—*Mason.*

[28] capable of understanding.

To see the man so [p]raised. But yet all this
Was but a maiden-longing, to be lost
As soon as found; till, sitting in my window, [281
Printing my thoughts in lawn, I saw a god,
I thought (but it was you), enter our gates:
My blood flew out and back again, as fast
As I had puffed it forth and sucked it in
Like breath: then was I called away in haste, [290
To entertain you. Never was a man,
Heaved from a sheep-cote to a sceptre, raised
So high in thoughts as I: you left a kiss
Upon these lips then, which I mean to keep
From you for ever: I did hear you talk,
Far above singing. After you were gone,
I grew acquainted with my heart, and searched [300
What stirred it so: alas, I found it love!
Yet far from lust; for, could I but have lived
In presence of you, I had had my end.
For this I did delude my noble father
With a feigned pilgrimage, and dressed myself
In habit of a boy; and, for I knew
My birth no match for you, I was past hope [310
Of having you; and, understanding well
That when I made discovery of my sex
I could not stay with you, I made a vow,
By all the most religious things a maid
Could call together, never to be known,
Whilst there was hope to hide me from men's eyes,
For other than I seemed, that I might ever [319
Abide with you. Then sat I by the fount,
Where first you took me up.

KING. Search out a match
Within our kingdom, where and when thou wilt,
And I will pay thy dowry; and thyself
Wilt well deserve him.

BEL. Never, sir, will I
Marry; it is a thing within my vow:
But, if I may have leave to serve the princess, [330
To see the virtues of her lord and her,
I shall have hope to live.

ARE. I, Philaster,
Cannot be jealous, though you had a lady
Dressed like a page to serve you; nor will I
Suspect her living here.—Come, live with me,
Live free as I do. She that loves my lord, [340
Cursed be the wife that hates her!

PHIL. I grieve such virtue should be laid in earth
Without an heir.—Hear me, my royal father:
Wrong not the freedom of our souls so much,
To think to take revenge of that base woman; [349
Her malice cannot hurt us. Set her free
As she was born, saving from shame and sin.

KING. Set her at liberty.—But leave the court;
This is no place for such.—You, Pharamond,
Shall have free passage and a conduct home
Worthy so great a prince. When you come there, [360
Remember 'twas your faults that lost you her,
And not my purposed will.

PHAR. I do confess,
Renownëd sir.

KING. Last, join your hands in one. Enjoy, Philaster,
This kingdom, which is yours, and, after me,
Whatever I call mine. My blessing on you! [371
All happy hours be at your marriage-joys,
That you may grow yourselves over all lands,
And live to see your plenteous branches spring
Wherever there is sun! Let princes learn
By this to rule the passions of their blood;
For what Heaven wills can never be withstood. [381

THE ALCHEMIST

BY

BENJAMIN JONSON

INTRODUCTION

There is no greater comedy in the English language than "The Alchemist." It stands apart from Jonson's other comedies by being scarcely flawed at all by that verbosity and love of detail that were the besetting sins of this great comic writer. As usual, he makes a display of his learning—we see it, for instance, in his revelation of the tricks of tobacco-sellers, and in his mastery of the jargon of alchemists—but he does not do it at the usual length, so as to make it become wearisome. From start to finish, the drama reeks with irony, with satire, with humor. It is full of the true comic spirit. It is coarse, certainly, for there was nothing feminine about Jonson's conception of the humorous, but never dependent upon its coarseness. The vulgarity, sturdy and Rabelaisian in its quality, is only incidental to the exploiting of the essential comedy of the idea. The play opens with a quarrel scene which is hardly to be excelled anywhere, a scene full of the richest humor; and what uproarious fun there is in the effecting of Mammon's overthrow by the appeal to his licentiousness! Dol's raving is the highest comedy; and there is comedy also in the appearance of the Puritan deacon upon the scene, for the reinforcing of the foes of Surly. There is subtle irony, too, in causing Surly to be undone by his scrupulousness.

No less remarkable than the humor is the management of the story. Coleridge described the plot as one of the three finest ever devised by the mind of man. Without going so far as that, it may certainly be ranked exceedingly high, and the manipulation of it is to be recognized as effected with extraordinary cleverness. With what consummate ability the initial quarrel scene has been devised for making the audience acquainted with the situation and the characters, and for preparing us for the ultimate mutual treachery of Subtle and Face! How neatly the especial weakness of every one of the dupes is played on! How cleverly Dapper, in I, is fooled by the pretense of anger on the part of Face! How ingenious is the bringing in of Dol in II, for Mammon to see her, thus providing an excuse for the failure of the entire work! And how amusingly Subtle and Face are led to betray themselves to one whom they take to be ignorant of the language! The only stupid thing either of the two arch-rogues do is the sending off of Kastril after Surly. The cleverest men make mistakes; therefore it is natural that

Face should have made such a blunder. The one blunder that his creator has made is having Dapper and Subtle heard in the street in the last act. If we are to believe that, we have a difficulty in believing that the schemers could have carried on their nefarious proceedings so long unsuspected.

The characters, with the exception of the colorless Dame Pliant, are admirable for the purpose. Kastril may be a mere humor; but he is presented with great force and spirit. The smooth Tribulation and the uncontrollable Ananias set off one another admirably. Face, with his magnificent audacity, and Subtle, with his inherent cowardice, constitute another splendidly contrasting pair. And yet another couple who are foils for one another are the sceptical Surly and the credulous Mammon. The latter is one of the great personages of the drama, worthy of a place beside the greatest comic conceptions of Shakespeare and Molière. His enthusiastic and glowing imagination and his prodigal generosity in licentiousness make him a figure to be remembered. How he contrasts with the petty-minded Drugger and Dapper, of whom the one is ready to give a crown, and the other hesitates about giving an angel, for the obtaining of great riches! It is easy to feel quite sorry for Sir Epicure when, utterly broken by the revelation of the fraud played upon him, he declares:

> I will go mount a turnip-cart, and preach
> The end o' the world within these two months.

And, for those who say Jonson had no imagination, it may be enough to point to the raptures of the lascivious old knight when he is talking to Dol Common in IV 1. It is truly the imagination of a full-blooded man; but do we need to demand that poetic imagination should always be anæmic?

"The Alchemist" was first acted in 1610, and was given to the press two years later. It is contained in the Jonson folio of 1616. A silly statement was made by Dryden that Jonson was indebted to Tomkis's "Albumazar," a very excellent and amusing play, adapted from the Italian, and bearing no real resemblance to it. It is sufficient perhaps to say that "Albumazar" was not acted till 1614–5, when it was produced at Cambridge.

CHARACTERS

SUBTLE, *the Alchemist.*
FACE, *the House-keeper.*
DOL COMMON, *their colleague.*
DAPPER, *a Lawyer's clerk.*
DRUGGER, *a Tobacco-man.*
LOVEWIT, *Master of the House.*
EPICURE MAMMON, *a Knight.*
PERTINAX SURLY, *a Gamester.*
TRIBULATION WHOLESOME, *a Pastor of Amsterdam.*
ANANIAS, *a Deacon there.*
KASTRIL.
DAME PLIANT, *his sister, a Widow.*
Neighbors, officers, a parson.

PLACE: *London.*
TIME: *Jonson's own day.*

ARGUMENT

T HE sickness hot, a master quit, for fear,
H is house in town, and left one servant there.
E ase him corrupted, and gave means to know
A Cheater and his punk; who now brought low,
L eaving their narrow practice, were become
C oz'ners at large; and only wanting some
H ouse to set up, and with him they here contract,
E ach for a share, and all begin to act.
M uch company they draw, and much abuse,
I n casting figures, telling fortunes, news,
S elling of flies, flat bawdry, with the stone,
T ill it, and they, and all in fume are gone.

THE ALCHEMIST

PROLOGUE

Fortune, that favors fools, these two short hours
We wish away, both for your sakes and ours,
Judging spectators; and desire in place,
To th' author justice, to ourselves but grace.
Our scene is London, 'cause we would make known,
No country's mirth is better than our own.
No clime breeds better matter for your whore,
Bawd, squire, impostor, many persons more,
Whose manners, now called humors, feed the stage;
And which have still been subject for the rage
Or spleen of comic writers. Though this pen
Did never aim to grieve, but better men;
Howe'er the age he lives in doth endure
The vices that she breeds, above their cure.
But, when the wholesome remedies are sweet,
And in their working gain and profit meet,
He hopes to find no spirit so much diseased,
But will with such fair córrectives be pleased.
For here he doth not fear who can apply.
If there be any that will sit so nigh
Unto the stream, to look what it doth run,
They shall find things they'd think, or wish, were done;
They are so natural follies, but so shown
As even the doers may see, and yet not own.

ACT ONE

LOVEWIT *has left his house in London in charge of his butler* JEREMY. *Believing that he will not return so long as any cases of plague are reported,* JEREMY *has entered into league with a cheater named* SUBTLE *and his punk.* SUBTLE *poses as an alchemist, and* JEREMY *gives the house for the practice of his roguery. He himself, posing as one* CAPTAIN FACE, *acts as the humbug's tout, and has brought to* [10 *him a number of victims, by playing upon their greed. Their principal victim is* SIR EPICURE MAMMON, *for whom* SUBTLE *is to produce the philosopher's stone.*

The play opens in the forenoon in one of the rooms of the house. There are five doors, one (called "the main door") leading to the front entrance and an anteroom; another ("the private door") [20 *to living rooms, a stairway, and a privy; a third ("the laboratory door") to the laboratory and a "chamber of demonstrations"; a fourth ("the back door") to a cellar, a garden, and a back entrance; a fifth ("the garden door") supplying another means of reaching the garden. (Entries and exits are by the main door, unless otherwise indicated, or an entry may be by the door whereby prior exit was made.) This matter of doors is dealt with in "Explanatory Notes".* [32

At the rising of the curtain SUBTLE *and* JEREMY *(or, as he is called, throughout,* FACE) *are quarrelling; and* DOL *is vainly endeavoring to quiet them, being fearful that the neighbors will hear.* JEREMY *is in a captain's uniform and has his sword drawn.* SUBTLE *holds nothing more dangerous than a phial.* [40

FACE. Believe 't, I will.
SUB. Thy worst. I fart at thee.
DOL. Ha' you your wits? Why gentlemen! for love—
FACE. Sirrah, I'll strip you—
SUB. What to do? Lick figs
Out at my—
FACE. Rogue, rogue! out of all your sleights. [49
DOL. Nay, look ye, sovereign, general, are you madmen?
SUB. O, let the wild sheep loose. I'll gum your silks
With good strong water, an you come.
DOL. Will you have
The neighbors hear you? Will you betray all?
Hark! I hear somebody.
FACE. Sirrah— [59
SUB. I shall mar
All that the tailor has made, if you approach.
FACE. You most notorious whelp, you insolent slave,
Dare you do this?
SUB. Yes, faith; yes, faith.
FACE. Why, who
Am I, my mongrel, who am I?
SUB. I'll tell you,
Since you know not yourself. [70
FACE. Speak lower, rogue.
SUB. Yes. You were once (time's not long past) the good,
Honest, plain, livery-three-pound-thrum, that kept
Your master's worship's house here in the Friars
For the vacations—
FACE. Will you be so loud?
SUB. Since, by my means, translated suburb-captain. [81
FACE. By your means, doctor dog!
SUB. Within man's memory,
All this I speak of.
FACE. Why, I pray you, have I
Been countenanced by you, or you by me?
Do but collect, sir, where I met you first.
SUB. I do not hear well. [89
FACE. Not of this, I think it.
But I shall put you in mind, sir—at Pie-corner,
Taking your meal of steam in from cooks' stalls,
Where, like the father of hunger, you did walk
Piteously costive, with your pinched-horn-nose,
And your complexion of the Roman wash, [100

Stuck full of black and melancholic worms,
Like powder-corns[1] shot at th' artillery-yard.
SUB. I wish you could advance your voice a little.
FACE. When you went pinned up in the several rags
Y' had raked and picked from dunghills, before day;
Your feet in mouldy slippers, for your kibes;[2]
A felt[3] of rug, and a thin threaden cloak,
That scarce would cover your no-buttocks—
SUB. So, sir!
FACE. When all your alchemy, and your algebra,
Your minerals, vegetals, and animals,
Your conjuring, coz'ning, and your dozen of trades,
Could not relieve your corps with so much linen
Would make you tinder, but to see a fire;
I ga' you count'nance, credit for your coals,
Your stills, your glasses, your materials;
Built you a furnace, drew you customers,
Advanced all your black arts; lent you, beside,
A house to practise in—
SUB. Your master's house!
FACE. Where you have studied the more thriving skill
Of bawdry, since.
SUB. Yes, in your master's house.
You and the rats here kept possessiön.
Make it not strange.[4] I know you were one could keep
The buttery-hatch still locked, and save the chippings,
Sell the dole beer to aqua-vitae men,[5]
The which, together with your Christmas vails[6]
At post-and-pair,[7] your letting out of counters,
Made you a pretty stock, some twenty marks,
And gave you credit to converse with cobwebs
Here, since your mistress' death hath broke up house.
FACE. You might talk softlier, rascal.
SUB. No, you scarab,
I'll thunder you in pieces. I will teach you
How to beware to tempt a Fury again
That carries tempest in his hand and voice.
FACE. The place has made you valiant.
SUB. No, your clothes.
Thou vermin, have I ta'en thee out of dung,
So poor, so wretched, when no living thing
Would keep thee company, but a spider or worse;
Raised thee from brooms and dust and wat'ring-pots;
Sublimed thee, and exalted thee, and fixed thee
I' the third region, the high state of grace;
Wrought thee to spirit, to quintessence, with pains
Would twice have won me the philosopher's work;
Put thee in words and fashion; made thee fit
For more than ordinary fellowships;
Giv'n thee thy oaths, thy quarrelling dimensions,
Thy rules to cheat at horse-race, cock-pit, cards,
Dice, or whatever gallant tincture else;
Made thee a second in mine own great art;
And have I this for thanks? Do you rebel?
Do you fly out i' the projectiön?[8]
Would you be gone now?
DOL. Gentlemen, what mean you?
Will you mar all?
SUB. Slave, thou hadst had no name—
DOL. Will you undo yourselves with civil war?

1 grains of powder.
2 chilblains.
3 a hat.
4 Do not feign to forget.
5 Traders in drink.
6 tips.
7 a card game.
8 when success is near.

SUB. Never been known, past *equi clibanum,*
The heat of horse-dung, under ground, in cellars,
Or an ale-house darker than deaf John's; been lost
To all mankind, but laundresses and tapsters,
Had not I been.
DOL. Do you know who hears you, sovereign?
FACE. Sirrah—
DOL. Nay, general, I thought you were civil.
FACE. I shall turn desperate, if you grow thus loud.
SUB. And hang thyself, I care not.
FACE. Hang thee, collier,
And all thy pots and pans, in picture I will,
Since thou hast moved me—
DOL. <O, this'll o'erthrow all.>
FACE. Write thee up bawd in Paul's; have all thy tricks
Of coz'ning with a hollow coal, dust, scrapings,
Searching for things lost, with a sieve and shears,
Erecting figures in your rows of houses,
And taking in of shadows with a glass,
Told in red letters; and a face cut for thee,
Worse than Gamaliel Ratsey's.
DOL. Are you sound?
Ha' you your senses, masters?
FACE. I will have
A book, but rarely reckoning thy impostures,
Shall prove a true philosopher's stone to printers.
SUB. Away, you trencher-rascal!
FACE. Out, you dog-leech!
The vomit of all prisons—
DOL. Will you be
Your own destructions, gentlemen?
FACE. Still spewed out
For lying too heavy o' the basket.[9]
SUB. Cheater!
FACE. Bawd!
SUB. Cow-herd!
FACE. Conjurer!
SUB. Cutpurse!
FACE. Witch!
DOL. O me!
We are ruined, lost! Ha' you no more regard
To your reputations? Where's your judgment? 'Slight,
Have yet some care of me, o' your republic—
FACE. Away, this brach! I'll bring thee, rogue, within
The statute of sorcery, tricesimo tertio
Of Harry the Eighth: ay, and perhaps thy neck
Within a noose, for laund'ring gold and barbing.[10]
DOL. You'll bring your head within a cockscomb, will you?

[*Realizing their danger, and annoyed at being called a "brach" (bitch),* DOL *proceeds to show that, though she calls the one "sovereign" and the other "general," she is the actual ruler. She snatches away* FACE'S *sword.*

And you, sir, with your menstrue![11] [*Dashes the phial to the floor, smashing it.*] Gather it up.—
'Sdeath! you abominable pair of stinkards,
Leave off your barking, and grow one again,
Or, by the light that shines, I'll cut your throats.
I'll not be made a prey unto the marshal
For ne'er a snarling dog-bolt o' you both.
Ha' you together cozened all this while,
And all the world, and shall it now be said,
Y' have made most courteous shift to cozen yourselves?—
[*To* FACE.] You will accuse him! You will "bring him in
Within the statute!" Who shall take your word—
A whoreson, upstart, apocryphal captain,
Whom not a Puritan in Blackfriars will trust
So much as for a feather?—[*To* SUBTLE.] And you too

[9] Eating more than his share of rations.
[10] sweating and clipping the coinage.
[11] dissolving liquid.

Will give the cause, forsooth! You will insult,
And claim a primacy in the divisions!
You must be chief! As if you, only, had
The powder to project[12] with, and the work [302
Were not begun out of equality,
The venture tripartite, all things in common,
Without priority!—'Sdeath! you perpetual curs,
Fall to your couples again, and cozen kindly,
And heartily, and lovingly, as you should,
And lose not the beginning of a term, [311
Or, by this hand, I shall grow factious too,
And take my part, and quit you.
FACE. 'Tis his fault;
He ever murmurs, and objects his pains,
And says the weight of all lies upon him.
SUB. Why, so it does.
DOL. How does it? Do not we
Sustain our parts? [320
SUB. Yes, but they are not equal.
DOL. Why, if your part exceed to-day, I hope
Ours may to-morrow match it.
SUB. Ay, they *may*.
DOL. "May," murmuring mastiff! Ay, and do.—God's will!
Help me to throttle him. [*Seizes* SUBTLE *by the throat.* [329
SUB. Dorothy! Mistress Dorothy!
'Ods precious! I'll do anything. What do you mean?
DOL. Because o' your fermentation and cibation?
SUB. Not I, by heaven—
DOL. Your Sol and Luna—[*To* FACE.] Help me.
SUB. Would I were hanged then! I'll conform myself.
DOL. Will you, sir? Do so then, and quickly: swear. [341
SUB. What should I swear?
DOL. To leave your faction, sir,
And labor kindly in the common work.
SUB. Let me not breathe if I meant aught beside.

[12] transmute metals.

I only used those speeches as a spur
To him.
DOL. I hope we need no spurs, sir.—[*To* FACE.] Do we? [350
FACE. 'Slid, prove to-day who shall shark best.
SUB. Agreed.
DOL. Yes, and work close and friendly.
SUB. 'Slight, the knot
Shall grow the stronger for this breach, with me. [*They shake hands.*
DOL. Why, so, my good baboons! Shall we go make
A sort[13] of sober, scurvy, precise neighbors, [361
That scarce have smiled twice sin' the king came in,[14]
A feast of laughter at our follies—rascals,
Would run themselves from breath, to see me ride,[15]
Or you t' have but a hole to thrust your heads in,[16]
For which you should pay ear-rent?[17] No, agree. [371
And may Don Provost ride a-feasting long,
In his old velvet jerkin and stained scarfs,
My noble sovereign, and worthy general,
Ere we contribute a new crewel garter
To his most worsted worship.
SUB. Royal Dol!
Spoken like Claridiana,[18] and thyself.
FACE. For which at supper, thou shalt sit in triumph, [381
And not be styled Dol Common, but Dol Proper,
Dol Singular: the longest cut at night,
Shall draw thee for his Dol Particular.
[*A bell rings.*
SUB. Who's that? One rings. To the window, Dol.—Pray heav'n,
The master do not trouble us this quarter. [*She goes to the window* [390 *and peeps out.*
FACE. O, fear him not. While there dies one a week

[13] crowd.
[14] ascended the throne.
[15] be carted as a whore.
[16] in the pillory.
[17] have your ears cut off.
[18] The heroine of the "Mirror of Knighthood."

O' the plague, he's safe from thinking toward London.
Beside, he's busy at his hop-yards now;
I had a letter from him. If he do,
He'll send such word, for airing o' the house,
As you shall have sufficient time to quit it:
Though we break up a fortnight, 'tis no matter.
SUB. Who is it, Dol?
DOL. A fine young quodling.
FACE. O,
My lawyer's clerk I lighted on last night,
In Holborn, at the Dagger. He would have
(I told you of him) a familiär,
To rifle with at horses and win cups.
DOL. O, let him in.
SUB. Stay. Who shall do't?
FACE. Get you
Your robes on; I will meet him, as going out.
DOL. And what shall I do?
FACE. Not be seen; away!
[DOL *goes out by the private door.*
Seem you very reserved.
SUB. Enough. [*Exit by the laboratory door.*
FACE, *talking loudly, for the benefit of the incoming* DAPPER. God be w' you, sir.
I pray you let him know that I was here:
His name is Dapper. I would gladly have stayed; but—
DAP., *within.* Captain, I am here.
FACE. Who's that?—He's come, I think, doctor.

Enter DAPPER, *a lawyer's clerk of very limited intelligence and imagination, mere putty in the hands of this trinity of rascals.*

—Good faith, sir, I was going away.
DAP. In truth,
I am very sorry, captain.
FACE. But I thought
Sure I should meet you.
DAP. Ay, I am very glad.
I had a scurvy writ or two to make,
And I had lent my watch last night to one
That dines to-day at the sheriff's, and so was robbed
Of my pass-time.

SUBTLE *has made himself look his part by donning his velvet cap and gown. He now re-enters.*

Is this the cunning-man?
FACE. This is his worship.
DAP. Is he a doctor?
FACE. Yes.
DAP. And ha' you broke with[19] him, captain?
FACE. Ay.
DAP. And how?
FACE. Faith, he does make the matter, sir, so dainty,
I know not what to say.
DAP. Not so, good captain.
FACE. Would I were fairly rid on't, believe me.
DAP. Nay, now you grieve me, sir. Why should you wish so?
I dare assure you, I'll not be ungrateful.
FACE. I cannot think you will, sir. But the law
Is such a thing—and then he says, Reade's matter
Falling so lately—
DAP. Reade! he was an ass,
And dealt, sir, with a fool.
FACE. It was a clerk, sir.
DAP. A clerk!
FACE. Nay, hear me, sir. You know the law
Better, I think—
DAP. I should, sir, and the danger:
You know, I showed the statute to you.
FACE. You did so.
DAP. And will I tell then! By this hand of flesh,
Would it might never write good court-hand more,
If I discover.[20] What do you think of me,
That I am a chiaus?
FACE. What's that?
DAP. The Turk was here.

[19] broached the matter to.
[20] reveal.

As one would say, do you think I am a Turk?
FACE. I'll tell the doctor so.
DAP. Do, good sweet captain.
FACE. Come, noble doctor, pray thee let's prevail;
This is the gentleman, and he is no chiaus.
SUB. Captain, I have returned you all my answer. [501
I would do much, sir, for your love; but this
I neither may, nor can.
FACE. Tut! do not say so.
You deal now with a noble fellow, doctor,
One that will thank you richly; and h'is no chiaus:
Let that, sir, move you. [509
SUB. Pray you, forbear—
FACE. He has
Four angels here. [DAPPER, *in accordance with a signal from* FACE, *offers the money to* SUBTLE, *who, playing his part, does not take it.*
SUB. You do me wrong, good sir.
FACE. Doctor, wherein? To tempt you with these spirits?
SUB. To tempt my art and love, sir, to my peril. [520
'Fore heav'n, I scarce can think you are my friend,
That so would draw me to apparent danger.
FACE. I draw you! A horse draw you, and a halter,
You, and your flies[21] together—
DAP. Nay, good captain.
FACE. That know no difference of men.
SUB. Good words, sir. [530
FACE. Good deeds, sir, doctor dogs'-meat. 'Slight, I bring you
No cheating Clim o' the Cloughs or Claribels,
That look as big as five-and-fifty and flush,[22]
And spit out secrets like hot custard—
DAP. Captain!
FACE. Nor any melancholic underscribe, [540
Shall tell the vicar; but a special gentle,
That is the heir to forty marks a year,
Consorts with the small poets of the time,
Is the sole hope of his old grandmother;
That knows the law, and writes you six fair hands,
Is a fine clerk, and has his ciph'ring perfect;
Will take his oath o' the Greek Testament, [551
If need be, in his pocket; and can court
His mistress out of Ovid.
DAP. Nay, dear captain—
FACE. Did you not tell me so?
DAP. Yes; but I'd ha' you
Use master doctor with some more respect.
FACE. Hang him, proud stag, with his broad velvet head! [560
But for your sake, I'd choke ere I would change
An article of breath with such a puckfist![23]
Come, let's be gone. [*Goes toward the main door.*
SUB. Pray you le' me speak with you.
DAP. His worship calls you, captain.
FACE. I am sorry
I e'er embarked myself in such a business. [571
DAP. Nay, good sir; he did call you.
FACE. Will he take then?
SUB. First, hear me—
FACE. Not a syllable, 'less you take.
SUB. Pray ye, sir—
FACE. Upon no terms but an *assumpsit*.
SUB. Your humor must be law.
[*He takes the money.*
FACE. Why now, sir, talk. [580
Now I dare hear you with mine honor. Speak.
So may this gentleman too.
SUB. Why, sir—
[*Offers to whisper* FACE.
FACE. No whisp'ring.
SUB. 'Fore heav'n, you do not apprehend the loss
You do yourself in this. [589
FACE. Wherein? for what?

[21] familiar spirits.
[22] The best hand at primero.
[23] niggard.

Sub. Marry, to be so importunate for one
That, when he has it, will undo you all:
He'll win up all the money i' the town.
Face. How?
Sub. Yes, and blow up gamester after gamester,
As they do crackers in a puppet-play.
If I do give him a familiär,
Give you him all you play for; never [600
set[24] him,
For he will have it.
Face. Y'are mistaken, doctor.
Why, he does ask one but for cups and horses,
A rifling fly; none o' your great familiars.
Dap. Yes, captain, I would have it for all games.
Sub. I told you so. [610
Face, *taking* Dapper *aside*. 'Slight, that's a new business!
I understood you, a tame bird, to fly
Twice in a term, or so, on Friday nights,
When you had left the office; for a nag
Of forty or fifty shillings.
Dap. Ay, 'tis true, sir;
But I do think, now, I shall leave the law;
And therefore— [620
Face. Why, this changes quite the case.
Do you think that I dare move him?
Dap. If you please, sir;
All's one to him, I see.
Face. What! for that money?
I cannot with my conscience; nor should you
Make the request, methinks.
Dap. No, sir, I mean
To add consideration. [630
Face. Why, then, sir,
I'll try. [*Goes to* Subtle.] Say that it were for all games, doctor?
Sub. I say then, not a mouth shall eat for him
At any ordinary, but o' the score,[25]
That is a gaming mouth, conceive me.
Face. Indeed!
Sub. He'll draw you all the treasure of the realm, [640
If it be set him.
Face. Speak you this from art?
Sub. Ay, sir, and reason too, the ground of art.
H'is o' the only best complexiön,
The queen of Fairy loves.
Face. What! Is he?
Sub. Peace.
He'll overhear you. Sir, should she but see him— [650
Face. What?
Sub. Do not you tell him.
Face. Will he win at cards too?
Sub. The spirits of dead Holland, living Isaac,
You'd swear, were in him; such a vigorous luck
As cannot be resisted. 'Slight, he'll put
Six o' your gallants to a cloak, indeed.
Face. A strange success, that some man shall be born to! [661
Sub. He hears you, man—
Dap. Sir, I'll not be ingrateful.
Face. Faith, I have a confidence in his good nature:
You hear, he says he will not be ingrateful.
Sub. Why, as you please; my venture follows yours.
Face. Troth, do it, doctor; think him trusty, and make him. [671
He may make us both happy in an hour;
Win some five thousand pound, and send us two on't.
Dap. Believe it, and I will, sir.
Face. And you shall, sir.
You have heard all?
Dap. No, what was't? Nothing, I, sir.
Face. Nothing?
Dap. A little, sir. [680
Face. Well, a rare star
Reigned at your birth.
Dap. At mine, sir! No!
Face. The doctor
Swears that you are—
Sub. Nay, captain, you'll tell all now.
Face. Allied to the queen of Fairy.
Dap. Who! That I am?
Believe it, no such matter— [690
Face. Yes, and that

[24] stake against.
[25] on credit.

You were born with a caul o' your head.
DAP. Who says so?
FACE. Come,
You know it well enough, though you dissemble it.
DAP. I' fac, I do not; you are mistaken.
FACE. How!
Swear by your fac, and in a thing so known [701
Unto the doctor? How shall we, sir, trust you
I' the other matter? Can we ever think,
When you have won five or six thousand pound,
You'll send us shares in't, by this rate?
DAP. By gad, sir,
I'll win ten thousand pound, and send you half. [710
I' fac's no oath.
SUB. No, no, he did but jest.
FACE. Go to. Go thank the doctor. He's your friend,
To take it so.
DAP. I thank his worship.
FACE. <So!
Another angel.
DAP. Must I? [719
FACE. Must you! 'Slight,
What else is thanks? Will you be trivial?> Doctor, [DAPPER *gives* SUBTLE *the money.*
When must he come for his familiär?
DAP. Shall I not ha' it with me?
SUB. O, good sir!
There must a world of ceremonies pass;
You must be bathed and fumigated first:
Besides, the queen of Fairy does not rise
Till it be noon. [730
FACE. Not if she danced to-night.
SUB. And she must bless it.
FACE. Did you never see
Her royal grace yet?
DAP. Whom?
FACE. Your aunt of Fairy?
SUB. Not since she kissed him in the cradle, captain;
I can resolve you that. [739
FACE, *to* DAPPER. <Well, see her grace,
Whate'er it cost you, for a thing that I know.
It will be somewhat hard to compass; but,
However, see her. You are made, believe it,
If you can see her. Her grace is a lone woman,
And very rich; and, if she take a fancy,
She will do strange things. See her, at [750 any hand.
'Slid, she may hap to leave you all she has!
It is the doctor's fear.
DAP. How will't be done, then?
FACE. Let me alone, take you no thought. Do you
But say to me, "Captain, I'll see her grace." [759
DAP. "Captain, I'll see her grace."
FACE. Enough.> [*One knocks without.*
SUB., *calling.* Who's there?
Anon. [*To* FACE.] <Conduct him forth by the back way.>
Sir, against one o'clock prepare yourself;
Till when you must be fasting; only take
Three drops of vinegar in at your nose,
Two at your mouth, and one at either ear; [769
Then bathe your fingers' ends and wash your eyes,
To sharpen your five senses, and cry "hum"
Thrice, and then "buz" as often; and then come. [*Exit.*
FACE. Can you remember this?
DAP. I warrant you.
FACE. Well then, away. It is but your bestowing
Some twenty nobles 'mong her grace's servants, [780
And put on a clean shirt. You do not know
What grace her grace may do you in clean linen. [FACE *and* DAPPER *go out by the back door.* SUBTLE, *within, pretends (for the impressing of his new victim) to address numerous clients.*
SUB. Come in! Good wives, I pray you forbear me now; [790
Troth, I can do you no good till afternoon.

He enters, followed by DRUGGER, *who is a poor creature with the narrowest outlook.*

SUB. What is your name, say you? Abel Drugger?
DRUG. Yes, sir.
SUB. A seller of tobacco?
DRUG. Yes, sir. [800
SUB. Umh!
Free of the grocers?
DRUG. Ay, an't please you.
SUB. Well—
Your business, Abel?
DRUG. This, an't please your worship;
I am a young beginner, and am building
Of a new shop, an't like your worship, just
At corner of a street—here's the plot[26] on't— [811
And I would know by art, sir, of your worship,
Which way I should make my door, by necromanty,
And where my shelves; and which should be for boxes,
And which for pots. I would be glad to thrive, sir:
And I was wished[27] to your worship by a gentleman, [821
One Captain Face, that says you know men's planets,
And their good angels, and their bad.
SUB. I do,
If I do see 'em—

Re-enter FACE.

FACE. What! my honest Abel?
Thou art well met here.
DRUG. Troth, sir, I was speaking, [830
Just as your worship came here, of your worship.
I pray you speak for me to master doctor.
FACE. He shall do anything.—Doctor, do you hear?
This is my friend, Abel, an honest fellow;
He lets me have good tobacco, and he does not
Sophisticate it with sack-lees or oil, [839
Nor washes it in muscadel and grains,
Nor buries it in gravel, under ground,
Wrapped up in greasy leather or pissed clouts:
But keeps it in fine lily pots, that, opened,
Smell like conserve of roses or French beans.
He has his maple block, his silver tongs,
Winchester pipes, and fire of juniper:
A neat, spruce, honest fellow, and no goldsmith.[28] [850
SUB. H'is a fortunate fellow, that I am sure on.
FACE. Already, sir, ha' you found it? Lo thee, Abel!
SUB. And in right way toward riches—
FACE. Sir!
SUB. This summer
He will be of the clothing of his company,[29]
And next spring called to the scarlet;[30] spend what he can. [861
FACE. What, and so little beard?
SUB. Sir, you must think,
He may have a receipt to make hair come;
But he'll be wise, preserve his youth, and fine for't;
His fortune looks for him another way.
FACE. 'Slid, doctor, how canst thou know this so soon? [870
I am amused[31] at that.
SUB. By a rule, captain,
In metoposcopy, which I do work by;
A certain star i' the forehead, which you see not.
Your chestnut or your olive-colored face
Does never fail: and your long ear doth promise.
I knew't, by certain spots, too, in his teeth, [880
And on the nail of his mercurial finger.
FACE. Which finger's that?
SUB. His little finger. Look.
You were born upon a Wednesday?
DRUG. Yes, indeed, sir.
SUB. The thumb, in chiromanty, we give Venus;

[26] plan.
[27] recommended.
[28] usurer.
[29] Wear the livery of the grocer's company.
[30] made sheriff.
[31] amazed.

The forefinger to Jove; the midst to Saturn;
The ring to Sol; the least to Mercury, [890
Who was the lord, sir, of his horoscope,
His house of life being Libra; which foreshowed
He should be a merchant and should trade with balance.
FACE. Why, this is strange!—Is't not, honest Nab?
SUB. There is a ship now coming from Ormus, [899
That shall yield him such a commodity
Of drugs—[*pointing to the plan*]. This is the west, and this the south?
DRUG. Yes, sir.
SUB. And those are your two sides?
DRUG. Ay, sir.
SUB. Make me your door then, south; your broad side, west:
And on the east side of your shop, aloft,
Write Mathlai, Tarmiel, and Baraborat;
Upon the north part, Rael, Velel, Thiel.
They are the names of those Mercurian spirits [912
That do fright flies from boxes.
DRUG. Yes, sir.
SUB. And
Beneath your threshold bury me a loadstone,
To draw in gallants that wear spurs: the rest,
They'll seem to follow. [920
FACE. That's a secret, Nab!
SUB. And, on your stall, a puppet, with a vice
And a court-fucus,[32] to call city-dames:
You shall deal much with minerals.
DRUG. Sir, I have.
At home, already—
SUB. Ay, I know, you have ars'nic,
Vitriol, sal-tartar, argaile, alkali,
Cinoper: I know all.—This fellow, captain, [931
Will come, in time, to be a great distiller,
And give a say—I will not say directly,
But very fair—at the philosopher's stone.
FACE. Why, how now, Abel! is this true?
DRUG., *to* FACE. <Good captain,
What must I give?
FACE. Nay, I'll not counsel thee.
Thou hear'st what wealth (he says, spend what thou canst) [941
Th'art like to come to.
DRUG. I would gi' him a crown.
FACE. A crown! and toward such a fortune? Heart!
Thou shalt rather gi' him thy shop. No gold about thee?
DRUG. Yes, I have a portague[33] I ha' kept this half-year.
FACE. Out on thee, Nab! 'Slight, [950 there was such an offer!
'Shalt keep't no longer, I'll gi' it him for thee.> [DRUGGER *gives him the coin.*] Doctor,
Nab prays your worship to drink this, and swears
He will appear more grateful, as your skill
Does raise him in the world.
DRUG. I would entreat
Another favor of his worship. [961
FACE. What is't, Nab?
DRUG. But to look over, sir, my almanac,
And cross out my ill days, that I may neither
Bargain, nor trust upon them.
FACE. That he shall, Nab:
Leave it, it shall be done, 'gainst afternoon. [970
SUB. And a direction for his shelves.
FACE. Now, Nab,
Art thou well pleased, Nab?
DRUG. Thank, sir, both your worships.
FACE. Away. [*Exit* DRUGGER.
Why, now, you smoky persecutor of nature!
Now do you see that something's to be done, [979
Beside your beech-coal, and your cor'sive[34] waters,
Your crosslets, crucibles, and cucurbites?
You must have stuff brought home to you, to work on;
And yet you think I am at no expense
In searching out these veins, then following 'em,

[32] face-paint.
[33] a coin worth about $18.
[34] corrosive.

Then trying 'em out. 'Fore God, my intelligence
Costs me more money than my [990
share oft comes to
In these rare works.
SUB. You are pleasant, sir.—How now!

Re-enter DOL.

SUB. What says my dainty Dolkin?
DOL. Yonder fish-wife
Will not away. And there's your giantess,
The bawd of Lambeth. [999
SUB. Heart, I cannot speak with 'em.
DOL. Not afore night, I have told 'em in a voice,
Thorough the trunk, like one of your familiars.
But I have spied Sir Epicure Mammon—
SUB. Where?
DOL. Coming along, at far end of the lane,
Slow of his feet, but earnest of his tongue [1011
To one that's with him.
SUB. Face, go you and shift.
Dol, you must presently make ready too.
[FACE *goes out by the private door, to effect a change.*
DOL. Why, what's the matter?
SUB. O, I did look for him
With the sun's rising: 'marvel he could sleep! [1020
This is the day I am to perfect for him
The magisterium, our great work, the stone;
And yield it, made, into his hands; of which
He has, this month, talked as he were possessed on't;
And now he's dealing pieces on't away.
Methinks I see him ent'ring ordinaries,
Dispensing for the pox, and plaguy houses, [1031
Reaching his dose, walking Moorfields for lepers,
And off'ring citizens' wives pomander bracelets,
As his preservative, made of the elixir;
Searching the 'spital, to make old bawds young;
And the highways, for beggars to make rich. [1040
I see no end of his labors. He will make
Nature ashamed of her long sleep, when art,
Who's but a step-dame, shall do more than she,
In her best love to mankind, ever could.
If his dream last, he'll turn the age to gold.

ACT TWO

SCENE I

It is the same room, two or three minutes later. MAMMON *and his sceptical friend* SURLY *enter.* MAMMON *is of gigantic proportions, while* SURLY *is of spare build.*

MAM. Come on, sir. Now you set your foot on shore
In *Novo Orbe:*[1] here's the rich Peru;
And there within, sir, are the golden mines, [10
Great Solomon's Ophir! He was sailing to't
Three years, but we have reached it in ten months.
This is the day wherein, to all my friends,
I will pronounce the happy word, BE RICH;
THIS DAY YOU SHALL BE SPECTATISSIMI.[2]
You shall no more deal with the hollow die, [20
Or the frail card; no more be at charge of keeping
The livery-punk for the young heir, that must
Seal, at all hours, in his shirt: no more,
If he deny, ha' him beaten to't, as he is
That brings him the commodity; no more
Shall thirst of satin, or the covetous hunger [29
Of velvet entrails[3] for a rude-spun cloak,
To be displayed at Madam Augusta's, make
The sons of Sword, and Hazard fall before

[1] The New World.
[2] most gazed at. [3] linings.

The golden calf, and on their knees, whole nights,
Commit idolatry with wine and trumpets,
Or go a-feasting after drum and ensign.
No more of this. You shall start up young viceroys,
And have your punks and punkettees, my Surly.
And unto thee I speak it first, BE RICH.—
[*Calling.*] Where is my Subtle there? Within, ho!
FACE, *within.* Sir,
He'll come to you by and by.
MAM. That's his fire-drake,
His Lungs, his Zephyrus, he that puffs his coals,
Till he firk nature up, in her own centre.
You are not faithful,[4] sir. This night I'll change
All that is metal in my house to gold;
And early in the morning will I send
To all the plumbers and the pewterers,
And buy their tin and lead up; and to Lothbury
For all the copper.
SUR. What, and turn that, too?
MAM. Yes, and I'll purchase Devonshire and Cornwall,
And make them perfect Indies! You admire[5] now?
SUR. No, faith.
MAM. But when you see th' effects of the Great Medicine,
Of which one part projected on a hundred
Of Mercury, or Venus, or the Moon,
Shall turn it to as many of the Sun;
Nay, to a thousand, so *ad infinitum:*
You will believe me.
SUR. Yes, when I see't, I will.
But if my eyes do cozen me so, and I
Giving 'em no occasion, sure I'll have
A whore shall piss 'em out next day.
MAM. Ha! why?
Do you think I fable with you? I assure you,
He that has once the flower of the sun,
The perfect ruby, which we call elixir,
Not only can do that, but, by its virtue,
Can confer honor, love, respect, long life;
Give safety, valor, yea, and victory,
To whom he will. In eight and twenty days,
I'll make an old man of fourscore a child.
SUR. No doubt; he's that already.
MAM. Nay, I mean,
Restore his years, renew him, like an eagle,
To the fifth age; make him get sons and daughters,
Young giants; as our philosophers have done,
The ancient patriarchs, afore the flood,
But taking, once a week on a knife's point
The quantity of a grain of mustard of it,
Become stout Marses, and beget young Cupids.
SUR. The decayed vestals of Pickthatch[6] would thank you,
That keep the fire alive there.
MAM. 'Tis the secret
Of nature naturized 'gainst all infections;
Cures all diseases coming of all causes;
A month's grief in a day, a year's in twelve;
And, of what age soever, in a month,
Past all the doses of your drugging doctors.
I'll undertake, withal, to fright the plague
Out o' the kingdom in three months.
SUR. And I'll
Be bound, the players shall sing your praises then,
Without their poets.[7]
MAM. Sir, I'll do't. Meantime,
I'll give away so much unto my man,
Shall serve th' whole city with preservative
Weekly; each house his dose, and at the rate—
SUR. As he that built the Water-work does with water?
MAM. You are incredulous.
SUR. Faith, I have a humor,
I would not willingly be gulled. Your stone
Cannot transmute me.

[4] convinced.
[5] wonder.
[6] a locality notorious for its brothels.
[7] because the theatres would not have to be closed.

MAM. Pertinax, Surly,
Will you believe antiquity? records?
I'll show you a book where Moses, and his sister,
And Solomon have written of the art;
Ay, and a treatise penned by Adam—
SUR. How! [140
MAM. O' the philosopher's stone, and in High Dutch.
SUR. Did Adam write, sir, in High Dutch?
MAM. He did;
Which proves it was the primitive tongue.
SUR. What paper?
MAM. On cedar board.
SUR. O that, indeed, they say,
Will last 'gainst worms. [150
MAM. 'Tis like your Irish wood
'Gainst cobwebs. I have a piece of Jason's fleece too,
Which was no other than a book of alchemy,
Writ in large sheepskin, a good fat ram-vellum.
Such was Pythagoras' thigh, Pandora's tub, [159
And all that fable of Medea's charms,
The manner of our work; the bulls, our furnace,
Still breathing fire; our argent-vive,[8] the dragon;
The dragon's teeth, mercury sublimate,
That keeps the whiteness, hardness, and the biting;
And they are gathered into Jason's helm,
Th' alembic, and then sowed in Mars his field, [170
And thence sublimed so often, till they are fixed.
Both this, th' Hesperian garden, Cadmus' story,
Jove's shower, the boon of Midas, Argus' eyes,
Boccace his Demogorgon, thousands more,
All abstract riddles of our stone.—How now! [179

FACE, *disguised now as* SUBTLE'S *assistant,* ULEN SPIEGEL, *enters by the private door.*

[8] quicksilver.

MAM. Do we succeed? Is our day come? And holds it?
FACE. The evening will set red upon you, sir;
You have color for it, crimson: the red ferment
Has done his office; three hours hence prepare you [190
To see projection.
MAM. Pertinax, my Surly,
Again I say to thee aloud, BE RICH.
This day thou shalt have ingots; and to-morrow
Give lords th' affront.—Is it, my Zephyrus, right?
Blushes the bolt's-head?
FACE. Like a wench with child, sir,
That were but now discovered to her master. [201
MAM. Excellent witty Lungs!—My only care is
Where to get stuff enough now, to project on;[9]
This town will not half serve me.
FACE. No, sir? Take
The covering off o' churches.
MAM. That's true.
FACE. Yes. [210
Let 'em stand bare, as do their auditory;
Or cap 'em new with shingles.
MAM. No, good thatch:
Thatch will lie light upo' the rafters, Lungs.
Lungs, I will manumit thee from the furnace;
I will restore thee thy complexion, Puff,
Lost in the embers; and repair this brain,
Hurt with the fume o' the metals. [220
FACE. I have blown, sir,
Hard, for your worship; thrown by many a coal,
When 'twas not beech; weighed those I put in, just
To keep your heat still even. These bleared eyes
Have waked to read your several colors, sir,
Of the pale citron, the green lion, the crow, [231
The peacock's tail, the plumëd swan.

[9] transmute.

MAM. And lastly,
Thou hast descried the flower, the *sanguis agni?*
FACE. Yes, sir.
MAM. Where's master?
FACE. At's prayers, sir, he;
Good man, he's doing his devotiöns
For the success. [240
MAM. Lungs, I will set a period
To all thy labors; thou shalt be the master
Of my seraglio.
FACE. Good, sir.
MAM. But, do you hear?
I'll geld you, Lungs.
FACE. Yes, sir.
MAM. For I do mean
To have a list of wives and concubines [250
Equal with Solomon, who had the stone
Alike with me; and I will make me a back
With the elixir, that shall be as tough
As Hercules, to encounter fifty a night.—
Th'art sure thou saw'st it blood?
FACE. Both blood and spirit, sir.
MAM. I will have all my beds blown up, not stuffed; [259
Down is too hard; and then, mine oval room
Filled with such pictures as Tiberius took
From Elephantis, and dull Aretine
But coldly imitated. Then, my glasses
Cut in more subtle angles, to disperse
And multiply the figures, as I walk
Naked between my succubae. My mists
I'll have of perfume, vapored 'bout the room,
To lose our selves in; and my baths, [270 like pits
To fall into; from whence we will come forth,
And roll us dry in gossamer and roses.—
Is it arrived at ruby?—Where I spy
A wealthy citizen, or rich lawyer,
Have a sublimed pure wife, unto that fellow
I'll send a thousand pound to be my cuckold. [280
FACE. And I shall carry it?
MAM. No. I'll ha' no bawds
But fathers and mothers: they will do it best,
Best of all others. And my flatterers
Shall be the best and gravest of divines
That I can get for money; my mere fools,
Eloquent burgesses; and then my poets,
The same that writ so subtly of the fart,
Whom I will entertain still for that subject. [292
The few that would give out themselves to be
Court and town-stallions, and eachwhere bely
Ladies who are known most innocent for them—
Those will I beg, to make me eunuchs of;
And they shall fan me with ten estrich tails [301
A-piece, made in a plume to gather wind.
We will be brave, Puff, now we ha' the med'cine.
My meat shall all come in, in Indian shells,
Dishes of agate set in gold, and studded
With emeralds, sapphires, hyacinths, and rubies.
The tongues of carps, dormice, and [310 camels' heels,
Boiled i' the spirit of sol and dissolved pearl
(Apicius' diet, 'gainst the epilepsy):
And I will eat these broths with spoons of amber,
Headed with diamond and carbuncle.
My foot-boy shall eat pheasants, calvered salmons,
Knots, godwits, lampreys. I myself will have [321
The beards of barbel served; instead of salads,
Oiled mushrooms; and the swelling unctuous paps
Of a fat pregnant sow, newly cut off,
Dressed with an exquisite and poignant sauce;
For which, I'll say unto my cook, "There's gold; [330
Go forth, and be a knight."
FACE. Sir, I'll go look

A little how it heightens. [*Exit by the laboratory door.*
MAM. Do.—My shirts
I'll have of taffeta-sarsnet, soft and light
As cobwebs; and, for all my other raiment,
It shall be such as might provoke the Persian,
Were he to teach the world riot anew.
My gloves of fishes and birds' skins, perfumed
With gums of paradise and Eastern air—
SUR. And do you think to have the stone with this?
MAM. No, I do think t' have all this with the stone.
SUR. Why, I have heard he must be *homo frugi,*
A pious, holy, and religious man,
One free from mortal sin, a very virgin.
MAM. That makes it, sir; he is so. But I buy it;
My venter[10] brings it me. He, honest wretch,
A notable, superstitiöus, good soul,
Has worn his knees bare, and his slippers bald,
With prayer and fasting for it; and, sir, let him
Do it alone, for me, still. Here he comes.
Not a profane word afore him; 'tis poison.

Enter SUBTLE *through the private door.*

MAM. Good morrow, father.
SUB. Gentle son, good morrow,
And to your friend there. What is he is with you?
MAM. An heretic, that I did bring along,
In hope, sir, to convert him.
SUB. Son, I doubt
You are covetous, that thus you meet your time
I' the just point, prevent[11] your day at morning.
This argues something worthy of a fear
Of importune and carnal appetite.
Take heed you do not cause the blessing leave you,
With your ungoverned haste. I should be sorry
To see my labors, now e'en at perfection,
Got by long watching and large patiënce,
Not prosper where my love and zeal hath placed 'em,
Which (heaven I call to witness, with yourself,
To whom I have poured my thoughts), in all my ends,
Have looked no way but unto public good,
To pious uses, and dear charity,
Now grown a prodigy with men; wherein
If you, my son, should now prevaricate,
And to your own particular lusts employ
So great and catholic a bliss, be sure
A curse will follow, yea, and overtake
Your subtle and most secret ways.
MAM. I know, sir;
You shall not need to fear me; I but come
To ha' you confute this gentleman.
SUR. Who is,
Indeed, sir, somewhat costive of belief
Toward your stone; would not be gulled.
SUB. Well, son,
All that I can convince him in is this:
The work is done; bright Sol is in his robe;
We have a med'cine of the triple soul,
The glorified spirit. Thanks be to heaven,
And make us worthy of it!—[*Calling.*] Ulen Spiegel!
FACE, *within.* Anon, sir.
SUB. Look well to the register.
And let your heat still lessen by degrees,
To the aludels.
FACE, *within.* Yes, sir.
SUB. Did you look
O' the bolt's head yet?
FACE, *within.* Which? On D, sir?
SUB. Ay;
What's the complexion?
FACE, *within.* Whitish.
SUB. Infuse vinegar,
To draw his volatile substance and tincture:
And let the water in glass E be filt

[10] venture.
[11] anticipate.

And put into the gripe's egg. Lute[12] him well;
And leave him closed *in balneo*.
FACE, *within*. I will, sir.
SUR. <What a brave language here is! next to canting.[13]>
SUB. I have another work you never saw, son,
That three days since passed the philosopher's wheel, [441
In the lent heat of Athanor, and's become
Sulphur o' Nature.
MAM. But 'tis for me?
SUB. What need you?
You have enough in that is perfect.
MAM. O, but—
SUB. Why, this is covetise!
MAM. No, I assure you,
I shall employ it all in pious uses, [450
Founding of colleges and grammar schools,
Marrying young virgins, building hospitals,
And, now and then, a church.

Re-enter FACE.

SUB. How now!
FACE. Sir, please you,
Shall I not change the filter?
SUB. Marry, yes; [459
And bring me the complexion of glass B.
[FACE *returns to the laboratory*.
MAM. Ha' you another?
SUB. Yes, son; were I assured
Your piety were firm, we would not want
The means to glorify it: but I hope the best.
I mean to tinct C in sand-heat to-morrow,
And give him imbibition.[14]
MAM. Of white oil?
SUB. No, sir, of red. F is come [470
over the helm too,
I thank my maker, in Saint Mary's bath,
And shows *lac virginis*. Blessed be heaven!
I sent you of his faeces there calcined:
Out of that calx I ha' won the salt of mercury.
MAM. By pouring on your rectifiëd water? [479
SUB. Yes, and reverberating in Athanor.

Re-enter FACE.

How now! what color says it?
FACE. The ground black, sir.
MAM. That's your crow's head?
SUR. <Your cock's comb's, is't not?>
SUB. No, 'tis not perfect. Would it were the crow!
That work wants something.
SUR. <O, I looked for this,
The hay[15] is a-pitching.> [490
SUB. Are you sure you loosed 'em
I' their own menstrue?[16]
FACE. Yes, sir, and then married 'em,
And put 'em in a bolt's-head nipped to digestion,
According as you bade me, when I set
The liquor of Mars to circulatiön
In the same heat.
SUB. The process then was right.
FACE. Yes, by the token, sir, the retort brake, [501
And what was saved was put into the pelican,
And signed with Hermes' seal.
SUB. I think 'twas so.
We should have a new amalgama.
SUR. <O, this ferret
Is rank as any polecat.>
SUB. But I care not;
Let him e'en die; we have enough beside, [511
In embrion. H has his white shirt on?
FACE. Yes, sir,
He's ripe for inceration, he stands warm,
In his ash-fire. I would not you should let
Any die now, if I might counsel, sir,
For luck's sake to the rest: it is not good.
MAM. He says right.
SUR. <Ay, are you bolted?> [520
FACE. Nay, I know't, sir,
I have seen th' ill fortune. What is some three ounces
Of fresh materials?
MAM. Is't no more?
FACE. No more, sir,
Of gold, t' amalgam with some six of mercury.

[12] Meal. [13] the beggars' language. [14] sorption.
[15] a rabbit-catching net. [16] dissolving fluids.

MAM. Away, here's money. What will serve?
FACE. Ask him, sir.
MAM. How much?
SUB. Give him nine pound: you may gi' him ten.
SUR. <Yes, twenty, and be cozened: do.>
MAM. There 'tis. [*Gives* FACE *money.*
SUB. This needs not; but that you will have it so,
To see conclusiöns of all; for two
Of our inferior works are at fixation,
A third is in ascension. Go your ways.—
Ha' you set the oil of Luna in kemia?
FACE. Yes, sir.
SUB. And the philosopher's vinegar?
FACE. Ay. [*Exit by the laboratory door.*
SUR. We shall have a salad!
MAM. When do you make projection?
SUB. Son, be not hasty, I exalt our med'cine,
By hanging him *in balneo vaporoso,*
And giving him solution; then congeal him;
And then dissolve him: then again congeal him;
For look, how oft I iterate the work,
So many times I add unto his virtue.
As, if at first one ounce convert a hundred,
After his second loose, he'll turn a thousand;
His third solution, ten; his fourth, a hundred;
After his fifth, a thousand thousand ounces
Of any imperfect metal into pure
Silver or gold, in all examinations,
As good as any of the natural mine.
Get you your stuff here against afternoon,
Your brass, your pewter, and your andirons.
MAM. Not those of iron?
SUB. Yes, you may bring them too;
We'll change all metals.
SUR. <I believe you in that.>
MAM. Then I may send my spits?
SUB. Yes, and your racks.
SUR. And dripping-pans, and pothangers, and hooks,
Shall he not?
SUB. If he please.
SUR. —To be an ass.
SUB. How, sir!
MAM. This gent'man you must bear withal:
I told you he had no faith.
SUR. And little hope, sir;
But much less charity, should I gull myself.
SUB. Why, what have you observed, sir, in our art,
Seems so impossible?
SUR. But your whole work, no more.
That you should hatch gold in a furnace, sir,
As they do eggs in Egypt!
SUB. Sir, do you
Believe that eggs are hatched so?
SUR. If I should?
SUB. Why, I think that the greater miracle.
No egg but differs from a chicken more
Than metals in themselves.
SUR. That cannot be:
The egg's ordained by nature to that end,
And is a chicken *in potentia.*
SUB. The same we say of lead and other metals,
Which would be gold if they had time.
MAM. And that
Our art doth further.
SUB. Ay, for 'twere absurd
To think that nature in the earth bred gold
Perfect i' the instant: something went before.
There must be remote matter.
SUR. Ay, what is that?
SUB. Marry, we say—
MAM. Ay, now it heats: stand, father:
Pound him to dust.
SUB. It is, of the one part,
A humid exhalation, which we call
Materia liquida, or the unctuous water;
On th' other part, a certain crass and viscous

Portion of earth; both which, concorporate,
Do make the elementary matter of gold;
Which is not yet *propria materia,*
But common to all metals and all stones;
For, where it is forsaken of that moisture
And hath more dryness, it becomes a stone;
Where it retains more of the humid fatness,
It turns to sulphur, or to quicksilver,
Who are the parents of all other metals.
Nor can this remote matter suddenly
Progress so from extreme unto extreme,
As to grow gold, and leap o'er all the means.
Nature doth first beget th' imperfect, then
Proceeds she to the perfect. Of that airy
And oily water, mercury is engendered;
Sulphur o' the fat and earthy part; the one,
Which is the last, supplying the place of male,
The other of the female, in all metals.
Some do believe hermaphrodeity,
That both do act and suffer. But these two
Make the rest ductile, malleable, extensive.
And even in gold they are; for we do find
Seeds of them by our fire, and gold in them;
And can produce the species of each metal
More perfect thence than nature doth in earth.
Beside, who doth not see in daily practice
Art can beget bees, hornets, beetles, wasps,
Out of the carcases and dung of creatures;
Yea, scorpions of an herb, being rightly placed?
And these are living creatures, far more perfect
And excellent than metal.

MAM. Well said, father!—
Nay, if he take you in hand, sir, with an argument,
He'll bray you in a mortar.

SUR. Pray you, sir, stay.
Rather than I'll be brayed, sir, I'll believe
That Alchemy is a pretty kind of game,
Somewhat like tricks o' the cards, to cheat a man
With charming.

SUB. Sir?

SUR. What else are all your terms,
Whereon no one o' your writers 'grees with other?
Of your elixir, your *lac virginis,*
Your stone, your med'cine, and your chrysosperm,
Your sal, your sulphur, and your mercury,
Your oil of height, your tree of life, your blood,
Your marchesite, your tutie, your magnesia,
Your toad, your crow, your dragon, and your panther;
Your sun, your moon, your firmament, your adrop,
Your lato, azoch, zernich, chibrit, heautarit,
And then your red man, and your white woman,
With all your broths, your menstrues, and materials
Of piss and egg-shells, women's terms, man's blood,
Hair o' the head, burnt clouts, chalk, merds, and clay,
Powder of bones, scalings of iron, glass,
And worlds of other strange ingredients
'Would burst a man to name?

SUB. And all these, named,
Intending but one thing; which art our writers
Used to obscure their art.

MAM. Sir, so I told him—
Because[17] the simple idiot should not learn it,
And make it vulgar.

SUB. Was not all the knowledge
Of the Aegyptians writ in mystic symbols?
Speak not the scriptures oft in parables?
Are not the choicest fables of the poets,

[17] So that.

That were the fountains and first springs of wisdom,
Wrapped in perplexed allegories?
MAM. I urged that,
And cleared to him, that Sisyphus was damned
To roll the ceaseless stone, only because
He would have made ours common. [DOL *appears at the private door.*] Who is this?
SUB., *pretending great annoyance (though this vision of the woman is part of the plan for the undoing of* SIR EPICURE). God's precious!—What do you mean? Go in, good lady,
Let me entreat you. [DOL *retires.*]—[*Calling.*] Where's this varlet?

Re-enter FACE.

FACE. Sir.
SUB. You very knave! do you use me thus?
FACE. Wherein, sir?
SUB. Go in and see, you traitor. Go! [*Exit* FACE *by the private door.*
MAM. Who is it, sir?
SUB. Nothing, sir; nothing.
MAM. What's the matter, good sir?
I have not seen you thus distempered: who is't?
SUB. All arts have still had, sir, their adversaries;
But ours the most ignorant.—

FACE *returns.*

What now?
FACE. 'Twas not my fault, sir; she would speak with you.
SUB. Would she, sir? Follow me. [*Exit by the private door.*
MAM., *stopping* FACE, *as that worthy is about to follow.* Stay, Lungs.
FACE. I dare not, sir.
MAM. How! pray thee, stay.
FACE, *answering as if fearfully perturbed.* She's mad, sir, and sent hither—
MAM. Stay, man; what is she?
FACE. A lord's sister, sir.
He'll be mad too.—
MAM. I warrant thee.—Why sent hither?
FACE. Sir, to be cured.
SUB., *calling from within.* Why, rascal!
FACE. Lo you!—[*Calling.*] Here, sir! [*Exit by the private door.*
MAM. 'Fore God, a Bradamante, a brave piece!
SUR. Heart, this is a bawdy-house! I'll be burnt else.
MAM. O, by this light, no: do not wrong him. H'is
Too scrupulous that way: it is his vice.
No, h'is a rare physician; do him right,
An excellent Paracelsian; and has done
Strange cures with mineral physic. He deals all
With spirits, he; he will not hear a word
Of Galen, or his tedious recipes.—

FACE *re-enters.*

How now, Lungs?
FACE. Softly, sir; speak softly. I meant
To ha' told your worship all. This must not hear.
MAM. No, he "will not be gulled"; let him alone.
FACE. Y'are very right, sir; she is a most rare scholar,
And is gone mad with studying Broughton's works.
If you but name a word touching the Hebrew,
She falls into her fit, and will discourse
So learnedly of genealogies,
As you would run mad too, to hear her, sir.
MAM. How might one do t'have conference with her, Lungs?
FACE. O, divers have run mad upon the conference.
I do not know, sir: I am sent in haste
To fetch a vial. [*Exit into the laboratory.*
SUR. Be not gulled, Sir Mammon.
MAM. Wherein? Pray ye, be patient.
SUR. Yes, as you are,
And trust confederate knaves and bawds and whores.

FACE *re-enters, with a vial.*

MAM. You are too foul, believe it.—
Come here, Zephyrus:
One word. [830
FACE. I dare not, in good faith.
[*Goes toward the private door.*
MAM. Stay, knave.
FACE. H'is extreme angry that you saw her, sir.
MAM. Drink that. [*Gives him money.*] What is she when she's out of her fit?
FACE. O, the most affablest creature, sir! so merry! [840
So pleasant! She'll mount you up, like quicksilver,
Over the helm; and circulate like oil,
A very vegetal: discourse of state,
Of mathematics, bawdry, anything—
MAM. Is she no way accessible? no means,
No trick to give a man a taste of her —wit
Or so? [850
SUB., *calling from within.* Ulen!
FACE. I'll come to you again, sir.
[*Exit by the private door.*
MAM. Surly, I did not think one o' your breeding
Would traduce personages of worth.
SUR. Sir Epicure,
Your friend to use; yet still loth to be gulled: [859
I do not like your philosophical bawds:
Their stone is lechery enough to pay for,
Without this bait.
MAM. Heart! you abuse yourself!
I know the lady, and her friends, and means,
The original of this disaster. Her brother
Has told me all.
SUR. And yet you ne'er saw her
Till now! [870
MAM. O yes, but I forgot. I have, believe it,
One o' the treacherous'st memories, I do think,
Of all mankind.
SUR. What call you her brother?
MAM. My lord—
He wi' not have his name known, now I think on't. [879
SUR. A very treacherous memory!
MAM. O' my faith—
SUR. Tut, if you ha' it not about you, pass it
Till we meet next.
MAM. Nay, by this hand, 'tis true.
He's one I honor, and my noble friend;
And I respect his house.
SUR. Heart! can it be
That a grave sir, a rich, that has no need, [890
A wise sir, too, at other times, should thus
With his own oaths and arguments make hard means
To gull himself? An this be your elixir,
Your *lapis mineralis,* and your lunary,
Give me your honest trick yet at primero,
Or gleek,[18] and take your *lutum sapientis,*
Your *menstruum simplex!* I'll have gold before you, [901
And with less danger of the quicksilver,
Or the hot sulphur.

Re-enter FACE.

FACE, *to* SURLY. Here's one from Captain Face, sir,
Desires you meet him i' the Temple-church,
Some half-hour hence, and upon earnest business.— [910
[*To* MAMMON.] <Sir, if you please to quit us now, and come
Again within two hours, you shall have
My master busy examining o' the works;
And I will steal you in unto the party,
That you may see her converse.> Sir, shall I say
You'll meet the captain's worship?
SUR. Sir, I will,
<But, by attorney, and to a second purpose. [921
Now, I am sure it is a bawdy-house;
I'll swear it, were the marshal here to thank me;
The naming this commander doth confirm it.

[18] card games.

Don Face! why h'is the most authentic dealer
I' these commodities, the superintendent
To all the quainter traffickers in town!
He is the visitor, and does appoint [931
Who lies with whom, and at what hour; what price;
Which gown, and in what smock, what fall,[19] what tire.[20]
Him will I prove, by a third person, to find
The subtleties of this dark labyrinth;
Which if I do discover, dear Sir Mammon, [940
You'll give your poor friend leave, though no philosopher,
To laugh; for you that are, 'tis thought, shall weep.>

FACE. Sir, he does pray you'll not forget.

SUR. I will not, sir.—
Sir Epicure, I shall leave you.

MAM. I follow you straight. [*Exit* SURLY. [950

FACE. But do so, good sir, to avoid suspicion.
This gent'man has a parlous head.

MAM. But wilt thou
Be constant to thy promise?

FACE. As my life, sir.

MAM. And wilt thou insinuate what I am, and praise me,
And say I am a noble fellow?

FACE. O, what else, sir? [960
And that you'll make her royal with the stone,
An empress; and yourself King of Bantam.

MAM. Wilt thou do this?

FACE. Will I, sir!

MAM. Lungs, my Lungs!
I love thee.

FACE. Send your stuff, sir, that my master [970
May busy himself about projectiön.

MAM. Th' hast witched me, rogue: take, go. [*Gives him money.*

FACE. Your jack, and all, sir.

MAM. Thou art a villain—I will send my jack,

[19] veil.
[20] head-dress.

And the weights too. Slave, I could bite thine ear.
Away, thou dost not care for me.

FACE. Not I, sir! [980

MAM. Come, I was born to make thee, my good weasel,
Set thee on a bench, and ha' thee twirl a chain
With the best lord's vermin of 'em all.

FACE. Away, sir.

MAM. A count, nay, a count palatine—

FACE. Good sir, go. [989

MAM. Shall not advance thee better: no, nor faster. [*Exit.*

Re-enter SUBTLE *and* DOL.

SUB. Has he bit? has he bit?

FACE. And swallowed, too, my Subtle.
I ha' giv'n him line, and now he plays, i' faith.

SUB. And shall we twitch him?

FACE. Thorough both the gills.
A wench is a rare bait, with which a man
No sooner's taken, but he straight firks[21] mad. [1002

SUB. Dol, my Lord Whachum's sister, you must now
Bear yourself *statelich*.

DOL. O, let me alone,
I'll not forget my race, I warrant you.
I'll keep my distance, laugh and talk aloud;
Have all the tricks of a proud [1010 scurvy lady,
And be as rude as her woman.

FACE. Well said, sanguine![22]

SUB. But will he send his andirons?

FACE. His jack, too,
And's iron shoeing-horn; I ha' spoke to him.—Well,
I must not lose my wary gamester yonder.

SUB. O, Monsieur Caution, that will not be gulled? [1021

FACE. Ay,
If I can strike a fine hook into him, now!—

[21] runs.
[22] rouge.

The Temple-church, there I have cast mine angle.
Well, pray for me. I'll about it.
[*One knocks.*
SUB. What, more gudgeons!
Dol, scout, scout! [DOL *goes to the window.*] Stay, Face, you must go to the door.— [1032
'Pray God it be my Anabaptist!—Who is't, Dol?
DOL. I know him not: he looks like a gold-end-man.[23]
SUB. Gods so! 'tis he, he said he would send—what call you him?
The sanctifiëd elder, that should deal
For Mammon's jack and andirons. [1040
Let him in.
Stay, help me off, first, with my gown.
[FACE *goes into the laboratory, with the gown.*] Away,
Madam, to your withdrawing chamber.
—Now, [*Exit* DOL *by the private door.*
In a new tune, new gesture, but old language.
This fellow is sent from one negotiates with me [1051
About the stone too, for the holy brethren
Of Amsterdam, the exiled saints, that hope
To raise their discipline[24] by it. I must use him
In some strange fashion now, to make him admire me. [1059

Enter ANANIAS, *an exceedingly zealous and fanatical Puritan.*

SUB., *calling.* Where is my drudge?

Re-enter FACE.

FACE. Sir!
SUB. Take away the recipient,
And rectify your menstrue from the phlegma.
Then pour it o' the Sol, in the cucurbite,
And let 'em macerate together.
FACE. Yes, sir. [1070
And save the ground?
SUB. No; *terra damnata*
Must not have entrance in the work.—Who are you?
ANA. A faithful brother,[25] if it please you.
SUB., *pretending to regard him as a brother alchemist.* What's that?
A Lullianist? a Ripley? *filius artis?* [1079
Can you sublime and dulcify? calcine?
Know you the sapor pontic? sapor stiptic?
Or what is homogene, or heterogene?
ANA. I understand no heathen language, truly.
SUB. Heathen! You Knipperdoling?[26] Is Ars sacra,
Or chrysopoeia, or spagyrica,
Or the pamphysic, or panarchic knowledge,
A heathen language? [1090
ANA. Heathen Greek, I take it.
SUB. How! Heathen Greek?
ANA. All's heathen but the Hebrew.
SUB. S'rah[27] my varlet, stand you forth and speak to him
Like a philosopher: answer i' the language:
Name the vexations, and the martyrizations
Of metals in the work. [1100
FACE. Sir, putrefaction,
Solutiön, ablution, sublimation,
Cohobation, calcination, ceration, and
Fixation.
SUB. This is heathen Greek, to you, now!—
And when comes vivification?
FACE. After mortification.
SUB. What's cohobation? [1109
FACE. 'Tis the pouring on
Your *aqua regis,* and then drawing him off,
To the trine circle of the seven spheres.
SUB. What's the proper passion of metals?
FACE. Malleation.
SUB. What's your *ultimum supplicium auri?*
FACE. Antimonium. [1120

[23] a buyer of gold odds and ends.
[24] church government.
[25] a Puritan.
[26] An Anabaptist leader.
[27] Sirrah.

SUB. This's heathen Greek to you! [1120
—And what's your mercury?
FACE. A very fugitive; he will be gone, sir.
SUB. How know you him?
FACE. By his viscosity,
His oleosity, and his suscitability.
SUB. How do you sublime him?
FACE. With the calce of egg-shells,
White marble, talc.
SUB. Your magisterium now:
What's that? [1131
FACE. Shifting, sir, your elements,
Dry into cold, cold into moist, moist into hot,
Hot into dry.
SUB. This's heathen Greek to you still!—
Your *lapis philosophicus?*
FACE. 'Tis a stone,
And not a stone; a spirit, a soul, and a body, [1141
Which if you do dissolve, it is dissolved;
If you coagulate, it is coagulated;
If you make it to fly, it flieth.
SUB. Enough.—
[*Exit* FACE *into the laboratory.*
This's heathen Greek to you! What are you, sir?
ANA. Please you, a servant of the exiled brethren, [1150
That deal with widows' and with orphans' goods,
And make a just account unto the saints:
A deacon.
SUB. O, you are sent from Master Wholesome,
Your teacher?
ANA. From Tribulation Wholesome,
Our very zealous pastor.
SUB. Good! I have [1160
Some orphans' goods to come here.
ANA. Of what kind, sir?
SUB. Pewter and brass, andirons and kitchenware;
Metals, that we must use our med'cine on;
Wherein the brethren may have a penn'orth
For ready money. [1169
ANA. Were the orphans' parents
Sincere professors?
SUB. Why do you ask?
ANA. Because
We then are to deal justly, and give, in truth,
Their utmost value.
SUB. 'Slid! you'd cozen else,
An if their parents were not of the faithful!— [1179
I will not trust you, now I think on it,
Till I ha' talked with your pastor. Ha' you brought money
To buy more coals?
ANA. No, surely.
SUB. No? How so?
ANA. The brethren bid me say unto you, sir,
Surely they will not venter any more
Till they may see projection.
SUB. How! [1190
ANA. You have had
For the instruments, as bricks, and loam, and glasses,
Already thirty pound; and for materials,
They say, some ninety more: and they have heard since
That one, at Heidelberg, made it of an egg,
And a small paper of pin-dust.
SUB. What's your name?
ANA. My name is Ananias. [1201
SUB. Out! the varlet
That cozened the apostles! Hence, away!
Flee, mischief! had your holy consistory
No name to send me, of another sound
Than wicked Ananias? Send your elders
Hither, to make atonement for you, quickly,
And gi' me satisfaction; or out goes
The fire; and down th' alembics, and the furnace, [1211
Piger Henricus, or what not. Thou wretch!
Both *sericon* and *bufo* shall be lost,
Tell 'em. All hope of rooting out the bishops,
Or th' anti-Christian hierarchy shall perish,
If they stay threescore minutes: the aqueity, [1220

Terreity, and sulphureity
Shall run together again, and all be annulled,
Thou wicked Ananias! [*Exit* Ananias.] This will fetch 'em,
And make 'em haste towards their gulling more.
A man must deal like a rough nurse, and fright [1229
Those that are froward, to an appetite.

Scene II

Subtle *is in the same room some half-an-hour later, it being now early afternoon.* Face, *in his uniform, enters, followed by* Drugger.

Face. H'is busy with his spirits, but we'll upon him.
Sub. How now! What mates, what bayards[28] ha' we here?
Face. I told you he would be furious. —Sir, here's Nab [10
Has brought you another piece of gold to look on,
<We must appease him: give it me> and prays you
You would devise—What is it, Nab?
Drug. A sign, sir.
Face. Ay, a good lucky one, a thriving sign, doctor.
Sub. I was devising now.
Face, *to* Subtle. <'Slight, do not say so, [21
He will repent he ga' you any more.>
What say you to his constellation, doctor,
The Balance?
Sub. No, that way is stale and common:
A townsman born in Taurus gives the bull,
Or the bull's head; in Aries, the ram,—
A poor device! No, I will have his name
Formed in some mystic character, whose *radii,* [32
Striking the senses of the passers-by,
Shall, by a virtual[29] influence, breed affections
That may result upon the party owns it:
As thus—

[28] blind horses.
[29] the result of the virtue of the device.

Face. Nab!
Sub. He first shall have *a bell,* that's [40 *Abel;*
And by it standing one whose name is *Dee,*[30]
In a *rug* gown, there's *D,* and *Rug,* that's *drug*
And right anenst him a dog snarling *er;*
There's Drugger, Abel Drugger. That's his sign.
And here's now mystery and hieroglyphic! [50
Face. Abel, thou art made.
Drug. Sir, I do thank his worship.
Face. Six o' thy legs[31] more will not do it, Nab.—
He has brought you a pipe of tobacco, doctor.
Drug. Yes, sir;
I have another thing I would impart—
Face. Out with it, Nab.
Drug. Sir, there is lodged, hard by me,
A rich young widow— [61
Face. Good! a bona roba?[32]
Drug. But nineteen at the most.
Face. Very good, Abel.
Drug. Marry, sh' is not in fashion yet; she wears
A hood, but 't stands a cop.
Face. No matter, Abel.
Drug. And I do now and then give her a fucus[33]— [70
Face. What! dost thou deal, Nab?
Sub. I did tell you, captain.
Drug. And physic too, sometime, sir; for which she trusts me
With all her mind. She's come up here of purpose
To learn the fashion.
Face. Good (his match too!)—On, Nab. [79
Drug. And she does strangely long to know her fortune.
Face. God's lid, Nab! send her to the doctor, hither.
Drug. Yes, I have spoke to her of his worship already;
But she's afraid it will be blown abroad,
And hurt her marriage.

[30] a reference to Dr. Dee, the astrologer.
[31] bows.
[32] handsome wench.
[33] face-paint.

FACE. Hurt it! 'tis the way
To heal it, if 'twere hurt; to make it more [90
Followed and sought. Nab, thou shalt tell her this.
She'll be more known, more talked of; and your widows
Are ne'er of any price till they be famous;
Their honor is their multitude of suitors.
Send her, it may be thy good fortune. What!
Thou dost not know? [100
DRUG. No, sir, she'll never marry
Under a knight: her brother has made a vow.
FACE. What! and dost thou despair, my little Nab,
Knowing what the doctor has set down for thee,
And seeing so many o' the city dubbed?
One glass o' thy water, with a madam I know, [110
Will have it done, Nab. What's her brother? a knight?
DRUG. No, sir, a gentleman newly warm in his land, sir,
Scarce cold in his one-and-twenty, that does govern
His sister here; and is a man himself
Of some three thousand a year, and is come up
To learn to quarrel, and to live by his wits, [121
And will go down again, and die i' the country.
FACE. How! to quarrel?
DRUG. Yes, sir, to carry quarrels,
As gallants do, and manage 'em by line.
FACE. 'Slid, Nab! the doctor is the only man
In Christendom for him. He has made a table, [130
With mathematical demonstrations,
Touching the art of quarrels: he will give him
An instrument to quarrel by. Go, bring 'em both,
Him and his sister. And, for thee, with her
The doctor happ'ly may persuade. Go to: [139
'Shalt give his worship a new damask suit
Upon the premises.
SUB. O, good captain!
FACE. He shall;
He is the honestest fellow, doctor.—Stay not;
No offers; bring the damask, and the parties.
DRUG. I'll try my power, sir.
FACE. And thy will too, Nab.
SUB. 'Tis good tobacco, this! What is't an ounce? [151
FACE. He'll send you a pound, doctor.
SUB. O no.
FACE. He will do't.
It is the goodest soul!—Abel, about it.
Thou shalt know more anon. Away, be gone. [*Exit* ABEL.
A miserable rogue, and lives with cheese,
And has the worms. That was the cause, indeed, [160
Why he came now: he dealt with me in private,
To get a med'cine for 'em.
SUB. And shall, sir. This works.
FACE. A wife, a wife for one on us, my dear Subtle!
We'll e'en draw lots, and he that fails, shall have
The more in goods, the other has in tail.
SUB. Rather the less; for she may be so light [171
She may want grains.
FACE. Ay; or be such a burden,
A man would scarce endure her for the whole.
SUB. Faith, best let's see her first, and then determine.
FACE. Content: but Dol must ha' no breath on it.
SUB. Mum.
Away you, to your Surly yonder, catch him. [182
FACE. Pray God I ha' not stayed too long!
SUB. I fear it. [*Exit* FACE.

ACT THREE

Scene I

Tribulation *and* Ananias *are outside* Lovewit's *house. The pastor is a much more politic individual than the fiery and uncompromising* Ananias. *It is almost an hour since the latter left the house.*

Tri. These chastisements are common to the saints,
And such rebukes we of the separation
Must bear with willing shoulders, as the trials [11
Sent forth to tempt our frailties.
Ana. In pure zeal,
I do not like the man; he is a heathen,
And speaks the language of Canaan, truly.
Tri. I think him a profane person indeed.
Ana. He bears
The visible mark of the beast in his forehead. [21
And for his stone, it is a work of darkness,
And with philosophy blinds the eyes of man.
Tri. Good brother, we must bend unto all means
That may give furtherance to the holy cause.
Ana. Which his cannot: the sanctified cause [31
Should have a sanctified course.
Tri. Not always necessary:
The children of perdition are ofttimes
Made instruments even of the greatest works.
Beside, we should give somewhat to man's nature,
The place he lives in, still about the fire
And fume of metals, that intoxicate [40
The brain of man, and make him prone to passion.
Where have you greater atheists than your cooks?
Or more profane, or choleric, than your glass-men?
More anti-Christian than your bell-founders?
What makes the devil so devilish, I would ask you [50
(Sathan, our common enemy), but his being
Perpetually about the fire and boiling
Brimstone and arsenic? We must give, I say,
Unto the motives, and the stirrers up
Of humors in the blood. It may be so,
Whenas the work is done, the stone is made, [59
This heat of his may turn into a zeal,
And stand up for the beauteous discipline
Against the menstruous cloth and rag of Rome.
We must await his calling, and the coming
Of the good spirit. You did fault, t' upbraid him
With the brethren's blessing of Heidelberg, weighing [70
What need we have to hasten on the work,
For the restoring of the silenced saints,
Which ne'er will be but by the philosopher's stone.
And so a learned elder, one of Scotland,
Assured me; *aurum potabile* being
The only med'cine for the civil magistrate, [79
T' incline him to a feeling of the cause;
And must be daily used in the disease.
Ana. I have not edified more, truly, by man;
Not since the beautiful light first shone on me:
And I am sad my zeal hath so offended.
Tri. Let us call on him then.
Ana. The motion's good,
And of the spirit; I will knock first. [*Knocks.*] Peace be within! [*There is no response; but they open the door and enter.* [92

Scene II

A moment or two later we are back in the same room as before. Subtle *greets the newcomers,* Tribulation *and* Ananias.

SUB. O, are you come? 'Twas time. Your threescore minutes
Were at last thread, you see; and down had gone
Furnus acediae, turris circulatorius: [9
Limbec, bolt's-head, retort, and pelican
Had all been cinders. Wicked Ananias!
Art thou returned? Nay, then it goes down yet.
TRI. Sir, be appeased; he is come to humble
Himself in spirit, and to ask your patience,
If too much zeal hath carried him aside
From the due path.
SUB. Why, this doth qualify! [20
TRI. The brethren had no purpose, verily,
To give you the least grievance; but are ready
To lend their willing hands to any project
The spirit and you direct.
SUB. This qualifies more!
TRI. And for the orphans' goods, let them be valued, [30
Or what is needful else to the holy work,
It shall be numbered; here, by me, the saints
Throw down their purse before you.
SUB. This qualifies most!
Why, thus it should be, now you understand.
Have I discoursed so unto you of our stone,
And of the good that it shall bring your cause? [41
Showed you (beside the main of hiring forces
Abroad, drawing the Hollanders, your friends,
From th' Indies, to serve you, with all their fleet)
That even the med'cinal use shall make you a faction
And party in the realm? as, put the case, [51
That some great man in state, he have the gout,
Why, you but send three drops of your elixir,
You help him straight: there you have made a friend.
Another has the palsy or the dropsy,
He takes of your incombustible stuff,
He's young again: there you have [60 made a friend.
A lady that is past the feat of body,
Though not of mind, and hath her face decayed
Beyond all cure of paintings, you restore
With the oil of talc: there you have made a friend;
And all her friends. A lord that is a leper,
A knight that has the bone-ache, or a squire [71
That hath both these, you make 'em smooth and sound
With a bare fricace[1] of your med'cine; still
You increase your friends.
TRI. Ay, 'tis very pregnant.
SUB. And then the turning of this lawyer's pewter
To plate at Christmas— [80
ANA. Christ-tide, I pray you.
SUB. Yet, Ananias!
ANA. I have done.
SUB. Or changing
His parcel[2] gilt to massy gold. You cannot
But raise you friends. Withal, to be of power
To pay an army in the field, to buy
The King of France out of his realms, or Spain [91
Out of his Indies. What can you not do
Against lords spiritual or temporal,
That shall oppone[3] you?
TRI. Verily, 'tis true.
We may be temporal lords ourselves, I take it.
SUB. You may be anything, and leave off to make
Long-winded exercises or suck up [100
Your *ha!* and *hum!* in a tune. I not deny,
But such as are not gracëd in a state,
May, for their ends, be adverse in religion,

[1] outward application.
[2] in part. [3] oppose.

And get a tune to call the flock together:
For, to say sooth, a tune does much with women
And other phlegmatic people; it is your bell. [110
ANA. Bells are profane; a tune may be religious.
SUB. No warning with you? Then farewell my patience.
'Slight! it shall down; I will not be thus tortured.
TRI. I pray you, sir.
SUB. All shall perish. I have spoke it.
TRI. Let me find grace, sir, in your eyes; the man, [121
He stands corrected: neither did his zeal,
But as your self, allow a tune somewhere,
Which now, being to'ard the stone, we shall not need.
SUB. No, nor your holy vizard,[4] to win widows
To give you legacies; or make zealous wives [130
To rob their husbands for the common cause:
Nor take the start of bonds broke but one day,
And say they were forfeited by providence.
Nor shall you need o'er night to eat huge meals,
To celebrate your next day's fast the better; [140
The whilst the brethren and the sisters, humbled,
Abate the stiffness of the flesh. Nor cast
Before your hungry hearers scrupulous bones;[5]
As whether a Christian may hawk or hunt,
Or whether matrons of the holy assembly
May lay their hair out, or wear doublets,
Or have that idol, starch, about their linen. [152
ANA. It is indeed an idol.
TRI. Mind him not, sir.—
I do command thee, spirit (of zeal, but trouble),
To peace within him!—Pray you, sir, go on.
SUB. Nor shall you need to libel 'gainst the prelates, [160
And shorten so your ears[6] against the hearing
Of the next wire-drawn grace; nor of necessity
Rail against plays, to please the alderman
Whose daily custard you devour; nor lie
With zealous rage till you are hoarse: not one
Of these so singular arts; nor call yourselves [170
By names of Tribulation, Persecution,
Restraint, Long-patience, and such like, affected
By the whole family or wood of you,
Only for glory, and to catch the ear
Of the disciple.
TRI. Truly, sir, they are
Ways that the godly brethren have invented,
For propagation of the holy cause, [180
As very notable means, and whereby also
Themselves grow soon, and profitably, famous.
SUB. O, but the stone, all's idle to't! Nothing!
The art of angels, nature's miracle,
The divine secret that doth fly in clouds
From east to west: and whose tradition
Is not from men, but spirits.
ANA. I hate traditions; [190
I do not trust 'em—
TRI. Peace!
ANA. They are popish all.—
I will not peace: I will not—
TRI. Ananias!
ANA. Please the profane, to grieve the godly; I may not.
SUB. Well, Ananias, thou shalt overcome.
TRI. It is an ignorant zeal that haunts him, sir: [201
But truly else a very faithful brother,
A botcher,[7] and a man by revelation

[4] facial expression.
[5] matters for discussion.
[6] Have your ears cut off.
[7] tailor.

That hath a competent knowledge of the truth.
SUB. Has he a competent sum there i' the bag
To buy the goods within? I am made guardian,
And must, for charity and conscience' sake,
Now see the most be made for my poor orphan;
Though I desire the brethren, too, good gainers:
There they are within. When you have viewed and bought 'em,
And ta'en the inventory of what they are,
They are ready for projection; there's no more
To do: cast on the med'cine, so much silver
As there is tin there, so much gold as brass,
I'll gi' it you in by weight.
TRI. But how long time,
Sir, must the saints expect yet?
SUB. Let me see,
How's the moon now? Eight, nine, ten days hence,
He will be silver potate; then three days
Before he citronise. Some fifteen days,
The magisterium will be perfected.
ANA. About the second day of the third week,
In the ninth month?
SUB. Yes, my good Ananias.
TRI. What will the orphans' goods arise to, think you?
SUB. Some hundred marks, as much as filled three cars,
Unladed now: you'll make six millions of 'em—
But I must ha' more coals laid in.
TRI. How?
SUB. Another load,
And then we ha' finished. We must now increase
Our fire to *ignis ardens;* we are past
Fimus equinus, balnei, cineris,
And all those lenter[8] heats. If the holy purse
Should with this draught fall low, and that the saints
Do need a present sum, I have a trick
To melt the pewter, you shall buy now instantly,
And with a tincture make you as good Dutch dollars
As any are in Holland.
TRI. Can you so?
SUB. Ay, and shall bide the third examination.
ANA. It will be joyful tidings to the brethren.
SUB. But you must carry it secret.
TRI. Ay; but stay,
This act of coining, is it lawful?
ANA. Lawful!
We know no magistrate: or, if we did,
This's foreign coin.
SUB. It is no coining, sir.
It is but casting.
TRI. Ha! you distinguish well:
Casting of money may be lawful.
ANA. 'Tis, sir.
TRI. Truly, I take it so.
SUB. There is no scruple,
Sir, to be made of it; believe Ananias;
This case of conscience he is studied in.
TRI. I'll make a question of it to the brethren.
ANA. The brethren shall approve it lawful, doubt not.
Where shall 't be done?
SUB. For that we'll talk anon.
[*A knocking is heard.*
There's some to speak with me. Go in, I pray you,
And view the parcels. [*Giving* TRIBULATION *a paper.*] That's the inventory
I'll come to you straight. [TRIBULATION *and* ANANIAS *go out by the back door.*] Who is it?—Face! appear.

Enter FACE, *in his uniform.*

SUB. How now! good prize?
FACE. Good pox! Yond' costive cheater
Never came on.
SUB. How then?
FACE. I ha' walked the round
Till now, and no such thing.

[8] milder.

SUB. And ha' you quit him?
FACE. Quit him! An hell would quit him too, he were happy.
'Slight! would you have me stalk like a mill-jade,
All day, for one that will not yield us grains?
I know him of old.
SUB. O, but to ha' gulled him
Had been a mastery.
FACE. Let him go, black boy!
And turn thee, that some fresh news may possess thee.
A noble count, a don of Spain (my dear
Delicious compeer, and my party-bawd),
Who is come hither private for his conscience
And brought munition with him, six great slops,
Bigger than three Dutch hoys, beside round trunks,
Furnished with pistolets, and pieces of eight,[9]
Will straight be here, my rogue, to have thy bath
(That is the color[10]), and to make his batt'ry
Upon our Dol, our castle, our cinque-port,
Our Dover pier, our what thou wilt. Where is she?
She must prepare perfumes, delicate linen,
The bath in chief, a banquet, and her wit;
For she must feel his epididimis.
Where is the doxy?
SUB. I'll send her to thee:
And but despatch my brace of little John Leydens,
And come again myself.
FACE. Are they within then?
SUB. Numb'ring the sum.
FACE. How much?
SUB. A hundred marks, boy. [*Exit by the back door.*
FACE. Why, this's a lucky day. Ten pounds of Mammon!
Three o' my clerk! A portague o' my grocer!
This o' the brethren! Besides reversions
And states to come, i' the widow and my count!
My share to-day will not be bought for forty—

Enter DOL *by the private door.*

DOL. What?
FACE. Pounds, dainty Dorothy! Art thou so near?
DOL. Yes; say, lord general, how fares our camp?
FACE. As with the few that had entrenched themselves
Safe, by their discipline, against a world, Dol,
And laughed within those trenches, and grew fat
With thinking on the booties, Dol, brought in
Daily by their small parties. This dear hour,
A doughty don is taken with my Dol;
And thou mayst make his ransom what thou wilt,
My Dowsabel; he shall be brought here, fettered
With thy fair looks, before he sees thee, and thrown
In a down-bed, as dark as any dungeon,
Where thou shalt keep him waking with thy drum—
Thy drum, my Dol, thy drum—till he be tame
As the poor blackbirds were i' the great frost,
Or bees are with a bason; and so hive him
I' the swan-skin coverlid and cambric sheets,
Till he work honey and wax, my little God's-gift.[11]
DOL. What is he, general?
FACE. An adalantado;[12]
A grandee, girl. Was not my Dapper here yet?
DOL. No.
FACE. Nor my Drugger?
DOL. Neither.
FACE. A pox on 'em!

[9] coins worth about $4 and a little more than $1 respectively.
[10] pretext.
[11] the literal meaning of *Dorothy*.
[12] A governor.

They are so long a-furnishing! such stinkards
Would not be seen upon these festival days.—

Re-enter SUBTLE.

How now! ha' you done?
SUB. Done. They are gone: the sum
Is here in bank, my Face. I would we knew
Another chapman now would buy 'em outright.
FACE. 'Slid! Nab shall do't against he ha' the widow,
To furnish household.
SUB. Excellent, well thought on;
Pray God he come.
FACE. I pray he keep away
Till our new business be o'erpassed.
SUB. But, Face,
How cam'st thou by this secret don?
FACE. A spirit
Brought me th' intelligence in a paper here,
As I was conjuring yonder in my circle
For Surly; I ha' my flies abroad. Your bath
Is famous, Subtle, by my means.—Sweet Dol,
You must go tune your virginal, no losing
O' the least time. And—do you hear?—good action!
Firk like a flounder; kiss like a scallop, close;
And tickle him with thy mother-tongue. His great
Verdugoship has not a jot of language:
So much the easier to be cozened, my Dolly.
He will come here in a hired coach, obscure,
And our own coachman, whom I have sent as guide,
No creature else. [*One knocks.*] Who's that? [DOL *goes to the window and looks out.*
SUB. It is not he?
FACE. O no, not yet this hour.
SUB. Who is't?
DOL. Dapper,
Your clerk.
FACE. God's will then, Queen of Faëry,
On with your tire; [DOL *goes out by the private door*]—and doctor, with your robes.
Let us despatch him, for God's sake.
SUB. 'Twill be long.
FACE. I warrant you, take but the cues I give you,
It shall be brief enough. [*Goes to the window.*] 'Slight, here are more!
Abel, and I think the angry boy, the heir,
That fain would quarrel.
SUB. And the widow?
FACE. No,
Not that I see. Away! [*Exit* SUBTLE *into the laboratory.*

Enter DAPPER.

FACE. O, sir, you are welcome.
The doctor is within, a-moving for you;
I have had the most ado to win him to it!—
He swears you'll be the darling o' the dice:
He never heard her highness dote till now, he says.
Your aunt has giv'n you the most gracious words
That can be thought on.
DAP. Shall I see her grace?
FACE. See her, and kiss her too.—

Enter DRUGGER, *followed by* KASTRIL.

What, honest Nab!
Hast brought the damask?
NAB. No, sir; here's tobacco.
FACE. 'Tis well done, Nab; thou'lt bring the damask too?
DRUG. Yes. Here's the gentleman, captain, Master Kastril,
I have brought to see the doctor.
FACE. <Where's the widow?
DRUG. Sir, as he likes, his sister, he says, shall come.
FACE. O, is it so? Good time.> Is your name Kastril, sir?
KAS. Ay, and the best o' the Kastrils, I'd be sorry else,
By fifteen hundred a year. Where is this doctor?

My mad tobacco-boy here tells me of one
That can do things. Has he any skill?
FACE. Wherein, sir?
KAS. To carry a business, manage a quarrel fairly,
Upon fit terms.
FACE. It seems, sir, you are but young
About the town, that can make that a question. [511
KAS. Sir, not so young but I have heard some speech
Of the angry boys, and seen 'em take tobacco,
And in his shop; and I can take it too.
And I would fain be one of 'em, and go down
And practise i' the country.
FACE. Sir, for the duello, [520
The doctor, I assure you, shall inform you,
To the least shadow of a hair; and show you
An instrument he has of his own making,
Wherewith no sooner shall you make report
Of any quarrel, but he will take the height on't
Most instantly, and tell in what degree
Of safety it lies in, or mortality; [531
And how it may be borne, whether in a right line,
Or a half circle; or may else be cast
Into an angle blunt, if not acute;
And this he will demónstrate. And then, rules
To give and take the lie by.
KAS. How! to take it?
FACE. Yes, in oblique he'll show you, or in circle; [541
But never in diameter. The whole town
Study his theorems, and dispute them ordinarily
At the eating academies.
KAS. But does he teach
Living by the wits too?
FACE. Anything whatever;
You cannot think that subtlety but he reads it. [550
He made me a captain. I was a stark pimp,
Just o' your standing, 'fore I met with him;
It's not two months since. I'll tell you his method:
First, he will enter you at some ordinary.
KAS. No, I'll not come there: you shall pardon me.
FACE. For why, sir? [560
KAS. There's gaming there, and tricks.
FACE. Why, would you be
A gallant, and not game?
KAS. Ay, 'twill spend a man.
FACE. Spend you! It will repair you when you are spent.
How do they live by their wits there, that have vented
Six times your fortunes?
KAS. What, three thousand a year!
FACE. Ay, forty thousand. [571
KAS. Are there such?
FACE. Ay, sir,
And gallants yet. Here's a young gentleman
Is born to nothing—[*points to* DAPPER] forty marks a year,
Which I count nothing: h'is to be initiated,
And have a fly o' the doctor. He will win you [581
By unresistible luck, within this fortnight,
Enough to buy a barony. They will set him
Upmost, at the groom porter's,[13] all the Christmas,
And for the whole year through at every place
Where there is play, present him [590 with the chair,
The best attendance, the best drink, sometimes
Two glasses of canary, and pay nothing;
The purest linen and the sharpest knife,
The partridge next his trencher; and somewhere
The dainty bed, in private, with the dainty. [599
You shall ha' your ordinaries bid for him,

[13] An officer of the royal household who kept open table at Christmas.

As playhouses for a poet; and the master
Pray him aloud to name what dish he affects,
Which must be buttered shrimps: and those that drink
To no mouth else will drink to his, as being
The goodly president mouth of all the board.
KAS. Do you not gull one? [610
FACE. God's my life! Do you think it?
You shall have a cast commander (can but get
In credit with a glover, or a spurrier,
For some two pair of either's ware aforehand)
Will, by most swift posts, dealing with him,
Arrive at competent means to keep himself, [621
His punk, and naked boy, in excellent fashion,
And be admired for't.
KAS. Will the doctor teach this?
FACE. He will do more, sir: when your land is gone
(As men of spirit hate to keep earth long),
In a vacation, when small money is stirring, [631
And ordinaries suspended till the term,
He'll show a perspective,[14] where on one side
You shall behold the faces and the persons
Of all sufficiënt young heirs in town,
Whose bonds are current for commodity;[15]
On th' other side, the merchants' [640
forms, and others,
That without help of any second broker,
Who would expect a share, will trust such parcels:
In the third square, the very street and sign
Where the commodity dwells, and does but wait
To be delivered, be it pepper, soap,
Hops, or tobacco, oatmeal, woad, or cheeses. [651
All which you may so handle, to enjoy
To your own use, and never stand obliged.
KAS. I' faith! is he such a fellow?
FACE. Why, Nab here knows him.
And then for making matches for rich widows,
Young gentlewomen, heirs, the fortunat'st man! [660
He's sent to, far and near, all over England,
To have his counsel, and to know their fortunes.
KAS. God's will, my suster shall see him.
FACE. I'll tell you, sir,
What he did tell me of Nab. It's a strange thing— [669
By the way, you must eat no cheese, Nab; it breeds melancholy,
And that same melancholy breeds worms; but pass it—
He told me, honest Nab here was ne'er at tavern
But once in's life.
DRUG. Truth, and no more I was not.
FACE. And then he was so sick—
DRUG. Could he tell you that too?
FACE. How should I know it? [680
DRUG. In troth, we had been a-shooting,
And had a piece of fat ram-mutton to supper,
That lay so heavy o' my stomach—
FACE. And he has no head
To bear any wine; for, what with the noise o' the fiddlers
And care of his shop, for he dares keep no servants— [690
DRUG. My head did so ache—
FACE. As he was fain to be brought home,
The doctor told me; and then a good old woman—
DRUG. Yes, faith, she dwells in Seacoal-lane—did cure me.
With sodden ale, and pellitory o' the wall;

[14] a magic glass.
[15] The allusion is to a trick of forcing borrowers to take part of their loans in goods, which the lenders bought back, through agents, for much less than its credited value.

'Cost me but twopence. I had another sickness
Was worse than that.
FACE. Ay, that was with the grief
Thou took'st for being sessed[16] at eighteen-pence,
For the waterwork.
DRUG. In truth, and it was like
T' have cost me almost my life.
FACE. Thy hair went off?
DRUG. Yes, sir; 'twas done for spite.
FACE. Nay, so says the doctor.
KAS. Pray thee, tobacco-boy, go fetch my suster;
I'll see this learned boy before I go;
And so shall she.
FACE. Sir, he is busy now;
But if you have a sister to fetch hither,
Perhaps your own pains may command her sooner;
And he by that time will be free.
KAS. I go, sir. [*Exit.*
FACE. Drugger, she's thine: the damask!—[*Exit* DRUGGER.] <Subtle and I
Must wrastle for her.> Come on, Master Dapper;
You see how I turn clients here away,
To give your cause dispatch; ha' you performed
The ceremonies were enjoined you?
DAP. Yes, o' the vinegar,
And the clean shirt.
FACE. 'Tis well: that shirt may do you
More worship than you think. Your aunt's afire,
But that she will not show it, t' have a sight on you.
Ha' you provided for her grace's servants?
DAP. Yes, here are six score Edward shillings.
FACE. Good!
DAP. And an old Harry's sovereign.
FACE. Very good!
DAP. And three James shillings, and an Elizabeth groat,
Just twenty nobles.[17]
FACE. O, you are too just.

[16] assessed. [17] about $33.

I would you had had the other noble in Maries.
DAP. I have some Philip and Maries.
FACE. Ay, those same
Are best of all: where are they? Hark, the doctor.

Enter SUBTLE, *disguised like a priest of Fairy, and bearing a robe, and a piece of rag.*

SUB., *in a feigned voice.* Is yet her grace's cousin come?
FACE. He is come.
SUB. And is he fasting?
FACE. Yes.
SUB. And hath cried "hum"?
FACE, *to* DAPPER. <"Thrice," you must answer.>
DAP. Thrice.
SUB. And as oft "buz"?
FACE. If you have, say.
DAP. I have.
SUB. Then, to her cuz,
Hoping that he hath vinegared his senses,
As he was bid, the Fairy queen dispenses,
By me, this robe, the petticoat of Fortune,
Which that he straight put on she doth impórtune. [*He puts the robe on* DAPPER.
And though to Fortune near be her petticoat,
Yet nearer is her smock, the queen doth note:
And therefore, even of that a piece she hath sent,
Which, being a child, to wrap him in was rent;
And prays him for a scarf he now will wear it,
With as much love as then her grace did tear it,
About his eyes, to show he is fortunate.
[*They blindfold him with the rag.*
And, trusting unto her to make his state,
He'll throw away all worldly pelf about him;
Which that he will perform, she doth not doubt him.
FACE. She need not doubt him, sir. Alas, he has nothing

But what he will part withal as willingly,
Upon there grace's work—throw away your purse—
As she would ask it—handkerchiefs and all—
She cannot bid that thing but he'll obey.—
If you have a ring about you, cast it off,
[DAPPER *throws money away.*
Or a silver seal at your wrist; her grace will send [810
Her fairies here to search you; therefore deal
Directly[18] with her highness: if they find
That you conceal a mite, you are undone.
DAP. Truly, there's all.
FACE. All what?
DAP. My money; truly.
FACE. Keep nothing that is transitory about you. [820
[*To* SUBTLE.] <Bid Dol play music.>
[SUBTLE *goes out by the private door, and returns.* DOL *plays on a cittern within.*] Look, the elves are come
To pinch you, if you tell not truth. Advise you. [*They pinch him.*
DAP. O! I have a paper with a spur-ryal[19] in't.
FACE. *Ti, ti.* [830
They knew 't, they say.
SUB. *Ti, ti, ti, ti.* He has more yet.
FACE. *Ti, ti, ti, ti.* I' the other pocket?
SUB. *Titi, titi, titi, titi.*
They must pinch him or he will never confess, they say. [*They pinch him again.*
DAP. O, O!
FACE. Nay, pray you, hold: he is her grace's nephew. [840
Ti, ti, ti. What care you? Good faith, you shall care.—
Deal plainly, sir, and shame the fairies. Show
You are innocent.
DAP. By this good light, I ha' nothing.
SUB. *Ti ti, ti ti to ta.* He does equivocate, she says: [849

[18] Honestly.
[19] A gold coin worth about $3.70.

Ti, ti do ti, ti ti do, ti da; and swears by the light when he is blinded.
DAP. By this good dark, I ha' nothing but a half-crown
Of gold about my wrist, that my love gave me;
And a leaden heart I wore sin' she forsook me.
FACE. I thought 'twas something. And would you incur
Your aunt's displeasure for these trifles? Come, [861
I had rather you had thrown away twenty half-crowns. [*Takes off the bracelet.*
You may wear your leaden heart still.
[*Enter* DOL *by the private door.*
SUB. <How now?
What news, Dol?
DOL. Yonder's your knight, Sir Mammon. [870
FACE. God's lid, we never thought of him till now!
Where is he?
DOL. Here hard by. H'is at the door.
SUB., *to* FACE. And you are not ready now!—Dol, get his suit.
He must not be sent back. [DOL *retires again.*
FACE. O, by no means. [880
What shall we do with this same puffin here,
Now he's o' the spit?
SUB. Why, lay him back awhile,
With some device.>

Re-enter DOL *with the Ulen Spiegel robes.*

Ti, ti ti, ti ti ti. Would her grace speak with me?
I come. <Help, Dol!> [*Knocking without.* [890
FACE., *speaking softly through the keyhole.*—Who's there? Sir Epicure,
My master's i' the way. Please you to walk
Three or four turns, but till his back be turned,
And I am for you. <Quickly, Dol!>
SUB. Her grace

Commends her kindly to you, Master Dapper.
DAP. I long to see her grace.
SUB. She now is set
At dinner in her bed, and she has sent you
From her private trencher, a dead mouse
And a piece of gingerbread, to be merry withal,
And stay your stomach, lest you faint with fasting:
Yet if you could hold out till she saw you, she says,
It would be better for you.
FACE. Sir, he shall
Hold out, an 't were this two hours, for her highness;
I can assure you that. We will not lose
All we ha' done.
SUB. He must not see, nor speak
To anybody, till then.
FACE. For that we'll put, sir,
A stay in's mouth.
SUB. Of what?
FACE. Of gingerbread.
Make you it fit. He that hath pleased her grace
Thus far shall not now crinkle for a little.—
Gape, sir, and let him fit you. [*They thrust a gag of gingerbread into his mouth.*
SUB. <Where shall we now
Bestow him?
DOL. I' the privy.>
SUB. Come along, sir,
I now must show you Fortune's privy lodgings.
FACE. Are they perfumed, and his bath ready?
SUB. All:
Only the fumigation's somewhat strong.
FACE., *speaking through the keyhole.* Sir Epicure, I am yours, sir, by and by. [*He and* SUBTLE *take* DAPPER *off by the private door.*

ACT FOUR

A few moments later, FACE *opens the main door for* MAMMON, *who enters.* FACE *is robed as Ulen Spiegel once more.*

FACE. O, sir, you're come i' the only finest time.
MAM. Where's master?
FACE. Now preparing for projection, sir.
Your stuff will b' all changed shortly.
MAM. Into gold?
FACE. To gold and silver, sir.
MAM. Silver I care not for.
FACE. Yes, sir, a little to give beggars.
MAM. Where's the lady?
FACE. At hand here. I ha' told her such brave things on you,
Touching your bounty and your noble spirit—
MAM. Hast thou?
FACE. As she is almost in her fit to see you.
But, good sir, no divinity i' your conference,
For fear of putting her in rage.
MAM. I warrant thee.
FACE. Six men will not hold her down. And then,
If the old man should hear or see you,—
MAM. Fear not.
FACE. The very house, sir, would run mad. You know it,
How scrupulous he is, and violent,
'Gainst the least act of sin. Physic or mathematics,
Poetry, state,[1] or bawdry, as I told you,
She will endure, and never startle; but
No word of controversy.
MAM. I am schooled, good Lungs.
FACE. And you must praise her house; remember that,
And her nobility.
MAM. Let me alone:
No herald, no, nor antiquary, Lungs,
Shall do it better. Go.
FACE. <Why, this is yet
A kind of modern happiness, to have
Dol Common for a great lady.> [*Exit by the private door.*
MAM. Now, Epicure,
Heighten thyself, talk to her all in gold;
Rain her as many showers as Jove did drops

[1] politics.

Unto his Danaë; show the god a miser,
Compared with Mammon. What! the stone will do't.
She shall feel gold, taste gold, hear gold, sleep gold;
Nay, we will *concumbere* gold: I will be puissant,
And mighty in my talk to her.

Re-enter FACE, *with* DOL, *who is dressed richly.*

<Here she comes.>
FACE. <To him, Dol, suckle him.> This is the noble knight
I told your ladyship—
MAM. Madam, with your pardon,
I kiss your vesture.
DOL. Sir, I were uncivil
If I would suffer that; my lip to you, sir.
MAM. I hope my lord your brother be in health, lady.
DOL. My lord my brother is, though I no lady, sir.
FACE. <Well said, my Guinea bird.>
MAM. Right noble madam—
FACE. <O, we shall have most fierce idolatry.>
MAM. 'Tis your prerogative.
DOL. Rather your courtesy.
MAM. Were there nought else t' enlarge your virtues to me,
These answers speak your breeding and your blood.
DOL. Blood we boast none, sir; a poor baron's daughter.
MAM. Poor! and gat you? Profane not. Had your father
Slept all the happy remnant of his life
After that act, lien but there still, and panted,
H' had done enough to make himself, his issue,
And his posterity noble.
DOL. Sir, although
We may be said to want the gilt and trappings,
The dress of honor, yet we strive to keep
The seeds and the materials.
MAM. I do see
The old ingredient, virtue, was not lost,
Nor the drug money used to make your compound.
There is a strange nobility i' your eye,
This lip, that chin! Methinks you do resemble
One o' the Austriac princes.
FACE. <Very like!
Her father was an Irish costermonger.>
MAM. The house of Valois just had such a nose,
And such a forehead yet the Medici
Of Florence boast.
DOL. Troth, and I have been likened
To all these princes.
FACE. <I'll be sworn I heard it.>
MAM. I know not how! it is not any one,
But e'en the very choice of all their features.
FACE. <I'll in and laugh.> [*Exit into the laboratory.*
MAM. A certain touch, or air,
That sparkles a divinity beyond
An earthly beauty!
DOL. O, you play the courtier.
MAM. Good lady, gi' me leave—
DOL. In faith, I may not,
To mock me, sir.
MAM. To burn i' this sweet flame;
The phoenix never knew a nobler death.
DOL. Nay, now you court the courtier, and destroy
What you would build. This art, sir, i' your words,
Calls your whole faith in question.
MAM. By my soul—
DOL. Nay, oaths are made o' the same air, sir.
MAM. Nature
Never bestowed upon mortality
A more unblamed, a more harmonious feature;
She played the step-dame in all faces else:
Sweet madam, le' me be particular—
DOL. Particular, sir! I pray you, know your distance.
MAM. In no ill sense, sweet lady: but to ask

How your fair graces pass the hours? I see
Y' are lodged here, i' the house of a rare man,
An excellent artist: but what's that to you? [160
Dol. Yes, sir; I study here the mathematics
And distillation.
Mam. O, I cry your pardon.
H' is a divine instructor; can extract
The souls of all things by his art, call all
The virtues, and the miracles of the sun,
Into a temperate furnace, teach dull nature [170
What her own forces are. A man the emp'ror
Has courted above Kelly;[2] sent his medals
And chains, t' invite him.
Dol. Ay, and, for his physic, sir—
Mam. Above the art of Aesculapius,
That drew the envy of the thunderer!
I know all this, and more. [179
Dol. Troth, I am taken, sir,
Whole with these studies that contémplate nature.
Mam. It is a noble humor; but this form
Was not intended to so dark a use.
Had you been crooked, foul, of some coarse mould,
A cloister had done well; but such a feature,
That might stand up the glory of a kingdom, [191
To live recluse is a mere solecism,
Though in a nunnery. It must not be.
I muse my lord your brother will permit it:
You should spend half my land first, were I he.
Does not this diamond better on my finger
Than i' the quarry? [200
Dol. Yes.
Mam. Why, you are like it.
You were created, lady, for the light.
Here, you shall wear it; take it, the first pledge
Of what I speak, to bind you to believe me.
Dol. In chains of adamant?
Mam. Yes, the strongest bands.
And take a secret too.—Here, by your side, [211
Doth stand this hour the happiest man in Europe.
Dol. You are contented, sir?
Mam. Nay, in true being,
The envy of princes and the fear of states.
Dol. Say you so, Sir Epicure?
Mam. Yes, and thou shalt prove it,
Daughter of honor. I have cast mine eye [221
Upon thy form; and I will rear this beauty
Above all styles.
Dol. You mean no treason, sir?
Mam. No, I will take away that jealousy.
I am the lord of the philosopher's stone,
And thou the lady.
Dol. How, sir! ha' you that? [230
Mam. I am the master of the mastery.
This day the good old wretch here o' the house
Has made it for us: now he's at projection.
Think therefore thy first wish now, let me hear it;
And it shall rain into thy lap, no shower,
But floods of gold, whole cataracts, a deluge, [240
To get a nation on thee.
Dol. You are pleased, sir,
To work on the ambition of our sex.
Mam. I am pleased the glory of her sex should know,
This nook here of the Friars is no climate
For her to live obscurely in, to learn
Physic and surgery, for the constable's wife [250
Of some odd hundred in Essex; but come forth,
And taste the air of palaces; eat, drink

[2] The partner of the astrologer Dee. The pair were guests of the Emperor Rudolph II in 1584.

The toils of emp'rics, and their boasted practice,
Tincture of pearl, and coral, gold, and amber;
Be seen at feasts and triumphs; have it asked
What miracle she is; set all the eyes [260
Of court a-fire, like a burning glass,
And work 'em into cinders, when the jewels
Of twenty states adorn thee, and the light
Strikes out the stars, that, when thy name is mentioned,
Queens may look pale; and, we but showing our love, [269
Nero's Poppaea may be lost in story!
Thus will we have it.
DOL. I could well consent, sir.
But in a monarchy, how will this be?
The prince will soon take notice, and both seize
You and your stone, it being a wealth unfit
For any private subject.
MAM. If he knew it.
DOL. Yourself do boast it, sir. [280
MAM. To thee, my life.
DOL. O, but beware, sir! You may come to end
The remnant of your days in a loathed prison,
By speaking of it.
MAM. 'Tis no idle fear.
We'll therefore go with all, my girl, and live
In a free state, where we will eat our mullets, [291
Soused in high-country wines, sup pheasants' eggs,
And have our cockles boiled in silver shells;
Our shrimps to swim again, as when they lived,
In a rare butter made of dolphins' milk,
Whose cream does look like opals; and with these [300
Delicate meats set ourselves high for pleasure,
And take us down again, and then renew
Our youth and strength with drinking the elixir,
And so enjoy a perpetuity
Of life and lust! And thou shalt ha' thy wardrobe
Richer than Nature's, still to change thyself, [311
And vary oft'ner, for thy pride, than she,
Or Art, her wise and almost-equal servant.

Re-enter FACE.

FACE. Sir, you are too loud. I hear you every word
Into the laboratory. Some fitter place;
The garden, or great chamber above.
<How like you her? [320
MAM. Excellent, Lungs! There's for thee. [*Gives him money.*
FACE. But do you hear?
Good sir, beware, no mention of the rabbins.
MAM. We think not on 'em.> [*Exeunt* MAMMON *and* DOL *by the private door.*
FACE. O, it is well, sir.—[*At the laboratory door.*] Subtle! [330

Enter SUBTLE.

Dost thou not laugh?
SUB. Yes; are they gone?
FACE. All's clear.
SUB. The widow is come.
FACE. And your quarreling disciple?
SUB. Ay.
FACE. I must to my captainship again then.
SUB. Stay, bring 'em in first. [340
FACE. So I meant. What is she?
A bonnibel?
SUB. I know not.
FACE. We'll draw lots:
You'll stand to that?
SUB. What else?
FACE. O, for a suit,
To fall now like a curtain, flap!
SUB. To th' door, man. [349
FACE. You'll ha' the first kiss, 'cause I am not ready. [*Exit.*
SUB. <Yes, and perhaps hit you through both the nostrils.>

FACE, *within*. Who would you speak with?
KAS., *within*. Where's the captain?
FACE, *within*. Gone, sir, About some business.
KAS., *within*. Gone! [359
FACE, *within*. He'll return straight. But, master doctor, his lieutenant, is here.

Enter KASTRIL, *followed by* DAME PLIANT.

SUB. Come near, my worshipful boy, my *terrae fili*,
That is, my boy of land; make thy approaches:
Welcome; I know thy lusts and thy desires, [370
And I will serve and satisfy 'em. Begin,
Charge me from thence, or thence, or in this line;
Here is my centre: ground thy quarrel.
KAS. You lie.
SUB. How, child of wrath and anger! the loud lie?
For what, my sudden boy?
KAS. Nay, that look you to, I am aforehand. [380
SUB. O, this's no true grammar,
And as ill logic! You must render causes, child,
Your first and second intentions, know your canons
And your divisions, moods, degrees, and differences,
Your predicaments, substance, and accident,
Series extern and intern, with their causes, [391
Efficiënt, material, formal, final,
And ha' your elements perfect?
KAS. What! is this
The angry tongue he talks in?
SUB. That false precept,
Of being aforehand, has deceived a number,
And made 'em enter quarrels oftentimes
Before they were aware; and afterward,
Against their wills. [401
KAS. How must I do then, sir?
SUB. I cry this lady mercy; she should first
Have been saluted. [*Kisses her.*] I do call you lady,
Because you are to be one ere 't be long,
My soft and buxom widow.
KAS. Is she, i' faith?
SUB. Yes, or my art is an egregious [410 liar.
KAS. How know you?
SUB. By inspection on her forehead,
And subtlety of her lip, which must be tasted
Often to make a judgment. [*Kisses her again.*] <'Slight, she melts
Like a myrobolane.> Here is yet a line,
In *rivo frontis*, tells me he is no knight.
DAME P. What is he then, sir? [420
SUB. Let me see your hand.
O, your *linea fortunae* makes it plain;
And *stella* here *in monte Veneris*.
But, most of all, *junctura annularis*.
He is a soldier, or a man of art, lady,
But shall have some great honor shortly.
DAME P. <Brother,
He's a rare man, believe me!> [428

Re-enter FACE, *in his uniform, his wardrobe being apparently accessible through the main door, as well as through the private door.*

KAS. <Hold your peace.
Here comes t' other rare man.> 'Save you, captain.
FACE. Good Master Kastril! Is this your sister?
KAS. Ay, sir.
Please you to kuss her, and be proud to know her. [440
FACE. I shall be proud to know you, lady. [*Kisses her.*
DAME P. <Brother,
He calls me lady, too.
KAS. Ay, peace: I heard it.> [*Takes her aside.*
FACE. <The count is come.
SUB. Where is he?
FACE. At the door.
SUB. Why, you must entertain him.
FACE. What will you do [451
With these the while?

SUB. Why, have 'em up, and show 'em
Some fustian book, or the dark glass.
FACE. 'Fore God,
She is a delicate dabchick! I must have her. [*Exit.*
SUB. Must you! Ay, if your fortune will, you must.> [460
Come, sir, the captain will come to us presently:
I'll ha' you to my chamber of demonstrations,
Where I'll show you both the grammar and logic,
And rhetoric of quarreling; my whole method
Drawn out in tables; and my instrument,
That hath the several scales upon 't, [470 shall make you
Able to quarrel at a straw's-breadth by moonlight.
And, lady, I'll have you look in a glass,
Some half an hour, but to clear your eyesight,
Against[3] you see your fortune, which is greater [478
Than I may judge upon the sudden, trust me. [*Goes out by the laboratory door with* KASTRIL *and the widow.*

FACE, *having admitted* SURLY *to the anteroom, re-enters.*

FACE. Where are you, doctor?
SUB., *within.* I'll come to you presently.
FACE. I will ha' this same widow, now I ha' seen her,
On any composition.

Re-enter SUBTLE. [490

SUB. What do you say?
FACE. Ha' you disposed of them?
SUB. I ha' sent 'em up.
FACE. Subtle, in troth, I needs must have this widow.
SUB. Is that the matter?
FACE. Nay, but hear me.
SUB. Go to.
If you rebel once, Dol shall know it all:
Therefore be quiet, and obey your chance.

[3] until.

FACE. Nay, thou art so violent now. Do but conceive, [502
Thou art old, and canst not serve—
SUB. Who cannot? I?
'Slight, I will serve her with thee, for a—
FACE. Nay,
But understand: I'll give you composition.[4]
SUB. I will not treat with thee. What! sell my fortune? [510
'Tis better than my birthright. Do not murmur:
Win her, and carry her. If you grumble, Dol
Knows it directly.
FACE. Well, sir, I am silent.
Will you go help to fetch in Don in state? [*Exit.*
SUB. I follow you, sir. <We must keep Face in awe, [520
Or he will overlook us like a tyrant.>

FACE *returns, ushering in* SURLY, *who is disguised as a Spanish grandee. In the belief that their visitor knows no English, the two rogues begin insulting him and betraying themselves.*

SUB. Brain of a tailor! who comes here? Don John!
SUR. *Señores, beso las manos a vuestras mercedes.*[5] [530
SUB. Would you had stooped a little, and kissed our *anos*.
FACE. Peace, Subtle!
SUB. Stab me; I shall never hold, man.
He looks in that deep ruff like a head in a platter,
Served in by a short cloak upon two trestles.
FACE. Or what do you say to a collar of brawn, cut down [541
Beneath the souse[6] and wriggled with a knife?
SUB. 'Slud, he does look too fat to be a Spaniard.
FACE. Perhaps some Fleming or some Hollander got him

[4] recompense.
[5] Gentlemen, I kiss your hands.
[6] ear.

In d'Alva's time; Count Egmont's bastard.
SUB. Don, [550
Your scurvy, yellow, Madrill[7] face is welcome.
SUR. *Grazia.*[8]
SUB. He speaks out of a fortification.
Pray God he ha' no squibs in those deep sets.[9]
SUR. *Por dios, señores, muy linda casa!* [10]
SUB. What says he?
FACE. Praises the house, I think;
I know no more but's action. [561
SUB. Yes, the *casa,*
My precious Diego, will prove fair enough
To cozen you in.—Do you mark?—You shall
Be cozened, Diego.[11]
FACE. Cozened, do you see,
My worthy Donzel,[12] cozened.
SUR. *Entiendo.*[13]
SUB. Do you intend it? So do we, dear Don. [571
Have you brought pistolets or portagues,
My solemn Don? [*To* FACE.] Dost thou feel any?
FACE, *feeling his pockets.* Full.
SUB. You shall be emptied, Don, pumped and drawn
Dry, as they say.
FACE. Milked, in troth, sweet Don.
SUB. See all the monsters; the great [580
lion of all, Don.
SUR. *Con licencia, se puede ver a esta señora?* [14]
SUB. What talks he now?
FACE. O' the señora.
SUB. O, Don,
This is the lioness, which you shall see
Also, my Don.
FACE. 'Slid, Subtle, how shall we do?
SUB. For what? [590
FACE. Why, Dol's employed, you know.
SUB. That's true.
'Fore heaven, I know not: he must stay, that's all.
FACE. Stay! that he must not by no means.
SUB. No! why?
FACE. Unless you'll mar all. 'Slight! he'll suspect it; [599
And then he will not pay, not half so well.
This is a travelled punk-master, and does know
All the delays; a notable hot rascal,
And looks already rampant.
SUB. 'Sdeath! and Mammon
Must not be troubled.
FACE. Mammon! in no case.
SUB. What shall we do then? [609
FACE. Think: you must be sudden.
SUR. *Entiendo que la señora es tan hermosa, que codicio tan a ver la como la bien aventuranza de mi vida.*[15]
FACE. *Mi vida!* 'Slid, Subtle, he puts me in mind o' the widow.
What dost thou say to draw her to 't, ha!
And tell her it is her fortune? All our venter
Now lies upon't. It is but one man more, [620
Which on's chance to have her: and beside,
There is no maidenhead to be feared or lost.
What dost thou think on't, Subtle?
SUB. Who, I? why—
FACE. The credit of our house too is engaged.
SUB. You made me an offer for my share erewhile. [630
What wilt thou gi' me, i'faith?
FACE. O, by that light
I'll not buy now. You know your doom to me.
E'en take your lot; obey your chance, sir; win her,
And wear her—out, for me.
SUB. 'Slight! I'll not work her then.
FACE. It is the common cause; therefore bethink you. [640
Dol else must know it, as you said.

[7] Madrid. [8] Thanks.
[9] the plaits of his ruff.
[10] By God, gentlemen, a very charming house.
[11] The English slang name for a Spaniard.
[12] diminutive of *Don.*
[13] I understand.
[14] With your permission, I should like to see the lady.
[15] I understand that the lady is so handsome that I am desirous of seeing her as the happiest adventure of my life.

SUB. I care not.
SUR. *Señores, porque se tarda tanto?* [16]
SUB. Faith, I am not fit, I am old.
FACE. That's now no reason, sir.
SUR. *Puede ser de hazer burla de mi amor?* [17]
FACE. You hear the Don too? By this air I call,
And loose the hinges. [*Calling in a half-voice.*] Dol! [651
SUB. A plague of hell—
FACE. Will you then do?
SUB. You are a terrible rogue!
I'll think of this. Will you, sir, call the widow?
FACE. Yes, and I'll take her too with all her faults,
Now I do think on't better.
SUB. With all my heart, sir;
Am I discharged o' the lot? [661
FACE. As you please.
SUB. Hands. [*They shake hands.*
FACE. Remember now, that upon any change
You never claim her.
SUB. Much good joy and health to you, sir!
Marry a whore! Fate, let me wed a witch first. [670
SUR. *Por estas honradas barbas* [18]—
SUB. He swears by his beard.
Dispatch, and call the brother too. [FACE *goes out by the laboratory door.*
SUR. *Tiengo duda, señores, que no me hagan alguna traycion.* [19]
SUB. How, issue on? Yes, *praesto, señor.* [20] Please you
Entratha the *chambratha,* worthy don:
Where if you please the fates, in your *bathada,* [681
You shall be soaked, and stroked, and tubbed, and rubbed,
And scrubbed, and fubbed, dear don, before you go.
You shall in faith, my scurvy babion [21] don,
Be curried, clawed, and flawed, and tawed, indeed.
I will the heartlier go about it now, [690
And make the widow a punk so much the sooner,
To be revenged on this impetuous Face:
The quickly doing of it is the grace.
[*Goes out with* SURLY, *by the private door.*

FACE *re-enters accompanied by* KASTRIL *and his sister.*

FACE. Come, lady: I knew the doctor would not leave
Till he had found the very nick of her fortune. [701
KAS. To be a countess, say you?
FACE. A Spanish countess, sir.
DAME P. Why, is that better than an English countess?
FACE. Better! 'Slight! make you that a question, lady?
KAS. Nay, she is a fool, captain; you must pardon her.
FACE. Ask from your courtier to your inns-of-court-man, [711
To your mere milliner; they will tell you all,
Your Spanish jennet is the best horse; your Spanish
Stoop is the best garb; your Spanish beard
Is the best cut; your Spanish ruffs are the best
Wear; your Spanish pavin the best [720 dance;
Your Spanish titillation in a glove
The best perfume; and, for your Spanish pike
And Spanish blade, let your poor captain speak.—
Here comes the doctor.

Re-enter SUBTLE, *with a paper in his hand.*

SUB. My most honored lady [730
(For so I am now to style you, having found
By this my scheme,[22] you are to undergo
An honorable fortune very shortly),
What will you say now, if some—
FACE. I ha' told her all, sir.

[16] Sirs, why this delay?
[17] Can it be to make fun of my love?
[18] By this honored beard—
[19] I fear, sirs, that you are playing me some trick.
[20] Immediately, sir. [21] baboon.
[22] horoscope.

And her right worshipful brother here: that she shall be
A countess (do not delay 'em, sir), a Spanish countess. [740
SUB. Still, my scarce-worshipful captain, you can keep
No secret! Well, since he has told you, madam,
Do you forgive him, and I do.
KAS. She shall do that, sir;
I'll look to 't; 'tis my charge.
SUB. Well then: nought rests
But that she fit her love now to her fortune. [750
DAME P. Truly I shall never brook a Spaniard.
SUB. No?
DAME P. Never sin' 'eighty-eight[23] could I abide 'em,
And that was some three year afore I was born, in truth.
SUB. Come, you must love him, or be miserable;
Choose which you will. [760
FACE. By this good rush, persuade her;
She will cry[24] strawberries else within this twelve month.
SUB. Nay, shads and mackerel, which is worse.
FACE. Indeed, sir!
KAS. God's lid! you shall love him, or I'll kick you. [769
DAME P. Why,
I'll do as you will ha' me, brother.
KAS. Do,
Or by this hand I'll maul you.
FACE. Nay, good sir,
Be not so fierce.
SUB. No, my enragëd child;
She will be ruled. What, when she comes to taste
The pleasures of a countess! to be courted— [780
FACE. And kissed and ruffled!
SUB. Ay, behind the hangings.
FACE. And then come forth in pomp!
SUB. And know her state!
FACE. Of keeping all th' idolators o' the chamber
Barer to her than at their prayers!
SUB. Is served
Upon the knee!
FACE. And has her pages, huissiers,
Footmen, and coaches— [791
SUB. Her six mares—
FACE. Nay, eight!
SUB. To hurry her through London, to th' Exchange,
Bet'lem, the China-houses—
FACE. Yes, and have
The citizens gape at her, and praise her tires,
And my lord's goose-turd bands,[25] that rides with her! [801
KAS. Most brave! By this hand, you are not my suster
If you refuse.
DAME P. I will not refuse, brother.

Re-enter SURLY.

SUR. *Que es esto, señores, que non se venga?*
Esta tardanza me mata![26]
FACE. It is the count come: [810
The doctor knew he would be here, by his art.
SUB. *En gallanta madama, Don! gallantissima!*
SUR. *Por todos los dioses, la mas acabada*
Hermosura, que he visto en ma vida![27]
FACE. Is't not a gallant language that they speak?
KAS. An admirable language! Is't not French? [821
FACE. No, Spanish, sir.
KAS. It goes like law French,
And that, they say, is the courtliest language.
FACE. List, sir.
SUR. *El sol ha perdido su lumbre, con el Resplandor que trae esta dama! Valga me dios!*[28]
FACE. He admires your sister. [830
KAS. Must not she make curt'sy?

[23] 1588, the year of the Armada.
[24] sell on the street.
[25] liveries.
[26] What does this mean, sirs, that she does not come? This delay is killing me.
[27] By all the gods, the most perfect beauty I have ever seen.
[28] The sun has lost his light with the splendor that proceeds from this lady, so help me God.

SUB. 'Ods will, she must go to him, man, and kiss him!
It is the Spanish fashion, for the women
To make first court.
FACE. 'Tis true he tells you, sir:
His art knows all.
SUR. *Porque no se acude?* [29]
KAS. He speaks to her, I think.
FACE. That he does, sir. [840
SUR. *Por el amor de dios, que es esto que se tarda?* [30]
KAS. Nay, see: she will not understand him! Gull, noddy!
DAME P. What say you, brother?
KAS. Ass, my suster!
Go kuss him, as the cunning man would ha' you;
I'll thrust a pin i' your buttocks else.
FACE. O no, sir. [850
[*She goes to* SURLY *and kisses him.*
SUR. *Señora mia, mi persona muy indigna esta*
Allegar a tanta hermosura.[31]
FACE. Does he not use her bravely?
KAS. Bravely, i' faith!
FACE. Nay, he will use her better.
KAS. Do you think so?
SUR. *Señora, si sera servida, entremos.*[32]
[*Exit with* DAME PLIANT *by the back door.* [861
KAS. Where does he carry her?
FACE. Into the garden, sir;
Take you no thought: I must interpret for her.
SUB., *to* FACE. <Give Dol the word.>
[FACE *goes out by the private door.*
Come, my fierce child, advance,
We'll to our quarreling lesson again.
KAS. Agreed. [870
I love a Spanish boy with all my heart.
SUB. Nay, and by this means, sir, you shall be brother
To a great count.
KAS. Ay, I knew that at first.
This match will advance the house of the Kastrils.
SUB. 'Pray God your sister prove but pliant! [879
KAS. Why,
Her name is so, by her other husband.
SUB. How!
KAS. The Widow Pliant. Knew you not that?
SUB. No, faith, sir;
Yet, by erection of her figure, I guessed it.
Come, let's go practise.
KAS. Yes, but do you think, doctor,
I e'er shall quarrel well?
SUB. I warrant you. [890

They go out by the laboratory door. A moment later, DOL *enters by the private door, followed by* MAMMON, *who is dreadfully upset. She is in her pretended fit of talking, and* MAMMON *can barely get in a word now and then. She is quoting from Broughton's "Concent of Scripture."*

DOL. "For after Alexander's death—"
MAM. Good lady— [900
DOL. "That Perdiccas and Antigonus were slain,
The two that stood, Seleuc' and Ptolemy—"
MAM. Madam—
DOL. "Made up the two legs, and the fourth beast:
That was Gog-north and Egypt-south; which after
Was called Gog-iron-leg and South-iron-leg—" [911
MAM. Lady—
DOL. "And then Gog-horned. So was Egypt, too;
Then Egypt-clay-leg, and Gog-clay-leg—"
MAM. Sweet madam—
DOL. "And last Gog-dust, and Egypt-dust, which fall
In the last link of the fourth chain. And these [920
Be stars in story, which none see, or look at—"
MAM. What shall I do?
DOL. "For," as he says, "except
We call the rabbins, and the heathen Greeks—"
MAM. Dear lady—
DOL. "To come from Salem, and from Athens, [929

[29] Why do you not draw near?
[30] For the love of God, why this delay?
[31] Madam, my person is altogether unworthy to meet with such beauty.
[32] Madam, if you please, let us go in.

And teach the people of Great Britain—"

Enter FACE *hastily, as* ULEN.

FACE. What's the matter, sir?
DOL. "To speak the tongue of Eber and Javan—"
MAM. O,
Sh' is in her fit.
DOL. "We shall know nothing—"
FACE. Death, sir,
We are undone! [939
DOL. "Where then a learned linguist
Shall see the ancient used communion
Of vowels and consonants—"
FACE. My master will hear!
DOL. "A wisdom which Pythagoras held most high—"
MAM. Sweet honorable lady!
DOL. "To comprise
All sounds of voices, in few marks of letters—"
FACE. Nay, you must never hope to [950 lay her now.
DOL. "And so we may arrive by Talmud skill
And profane Greek to raise the building up
Of Helen's house against the Ismaelite,
King of Thogarma, and his habergions
Brimstony, blue, and fiery; and the force
Of king Abaddon, and the beast of Cittim: [960
Which rabbi David Kimchi, Onkelos,
And Aben Ezra do interpret Rome."

The five following speeches are delivered while DOL *is giving this, her final quotation from Broughton.*

FACE. How did you put her into 't?
MAM. Alas, I talked
Of a fifth monarchy I would erect
With the philosopher's stone, by chance, and she [970
Falls on the other four straight.
FACE. Out of Broughton!
I told you so. 'Slid! stop her mouth.
MAM. Is 't best?
FACE. She'll never leave else. If the old man hear her,
We are but faeces, ashes.
SUB., *within*. What's to do there?
FACE. O, we are lost! Now she hears him, she is quiet. [980

Re-enter SUBTLE. *They separate hastily.* MAMMON *seeks a hiding-place in the room;* DOL *runs out by the private door; and* FACE *slips out behind* SUBTLE *into the laboratory.*

MAM. Where shall I hide me!
SUB. How! what sight is here?
Close deeds of darkness, and that shun the light!
Bring him again. Who is he? What, my son! [991
O, I have lived too long.
MAM. Nay, good, dear father,
There was no unchaste purpose.
SUB. Not? and flee me
When I come in?
MAM. That was my error.
SUB. Error?
Guilt, guilt, my son; give it the right name. No marvel [1000
If I found check in our great work within,
When such affairs as these were managing!
MAM. Why, have you so?
SUB. It has gone back this half hour:
And all the rest of our less works stand still.
Where is the instrument of wickedness,
My lewd, false drudge? [1010
MAM. Nay, good sir, blame not him;
Believe me, 'twas against his will or knowledge:
I saw her by chance.
SUB. Will you commit more sin,
T' excuse a varlet?
MAM. By my hope, 'tis true, sir.
SUB. Nay, then I wonder less, if you, for whom [1020
The blessing was prepared, would so tempt heaven,
And lose your fortunes.
MAM. Why, sir?
SUB. This will hinder
The work a month at least.
MAM. Why, if it do,

What remedy? But think it not, good father:
Our purposes were honest.[33]
SUB. As they were,
So the reward will prove. [*A great crack and noise within.*]—How now! ay me!
God and all saints be good to us!—

Re-enter FACE.

What's that?
FACE. O, sir, we are defeated! All the works
Are flown *in fumo*,[34] every glass is burst;
Furnace and all rent down, as if a bolt
Of thunder had been driven through the house.
Retorts, receivers, pelicans, bolt heads,
All struck in shivers! [SUBTLE *falls down as in a swoon.*] Help, good sir! alas,
Coldness and death invades him. Nay, Sir Mammon,
Do the fair offices of a man! You stand,
As you were readier to depart than he.
[*One knocks.*
Who's there? [*Runs to the window and looks out.*] My lord her brother is come.
MAM. Ha, Lungs!
FACE. His coach is at the door. Avoid his sight;
For he's as furious as his sister is mad.
MAM. Alas!
FACE. My brain is quite undone with the fume, sir;
I ne'er must hope to be mine own man again.
MAM. Is all lost, Lungs? Will nothing be preserved
Of all our cost?
FACE. Faith, very little, sir;
A peck of coals or so, which is cold comfort, sir.
MAM. O, my voluptuous mind! I am justly punished.
FACE. And so am I, sir.
MAM. Cast from all my hopes—
FACE. Nay, certainties, sir.
MAM. By mine own base affections.
SUB., *seeming to come to himself.* O, the curst fruits of vice and lust!
MAM. Good father,
It was my sin. Forgive it.
SUB. Hangs my roof
Over us still, and will not fall, O justice,
Upon us, for this wicked man?
FACE. Nay, look, sir,
You grieve him now with staying in his sight.
Good sir, the nobleman will come too, and take you,
And that may breed a tragedy.
MAM. I'll go.
FACE. Ay, and repent at home, sir. It may be,
For some good penance you may ha' it yet;
A hundred pound to the box at Bet'lem[35]—
MAM. Yes.
FACE. For the restoring such as ha' their wits.
MAM. I'll do't.
FACE. I'll send one to you to receive it.
MAM. Do.
Is no projection left?
FACE. All flown, or stinks, sir.
MAM. Will nought be saved that's good for med'cine, think'st thou?
FACE. I cannot tell, sir. There will be perhaps
Something about the scraping of the shards
Will cure the itch, <though not your itch of mind, sir.>
It shall be saved for you, and sent home. Good sir,
This way, for fear the lord should meet you. [*Shows* MAMMON *out by the back door.*
SUB., *raising his head.* Face!
FACE. Ay.
SUB. Is he gone?
FACE. Yes, and as heavily
As all the gold he hoped for were in his blood.
Let us be light though.
SUB., *leaping up.* Ay, as balls, and bound,

[33] chaste. [34] into smoke. [35] madhouse.

And hit our heads against the roof for joy:
There's so much of our care now cast away.
FACE. Now to our don.
SUB. Yes, your young widow by this time
Is made a countess, Face; sh' has been in travail
Of a young heir for you.
FACE. Good, sir.
SUB. Off with your case,[36]
And greet her kindly, as a bridegroom should,
After these common hazards.
FACE. Very well, sir!
Will you go fetch Don Diego off the while?
SUB. And fetch him over too, if you'll be pleased, sir.
Would Dol were in her place, to pick his pockets now!
FACE. Why, you can do it as well, if you would set to't.
I pray you prove your virtue.[37]
SUB. For your sake, sir.
[*Goes out by the garden door, and* FACE *by the private door.* SUBTLE, *however, misses* SURLY, *who enters with* DAME PLIANT *by the back door.* SURLY *has unmasked the rogues to her and shown her her danger.*
SUR. Lady, you see into what hands you are fall'n;
'Mongst what a nest of villains! and how near
Your honor was t' have catched a certain clap,
Through your credulity, had I but been
So punctually forward as place, time,
And other circumstance would ha' made a man;
For you are a handsome woman: would you were wise too!
I am a gentleman come here disguised,
Only to find the knaveries of this citadel;
And, where I might have wronged your honor, and have not,
I claim some interest in your love. You are,
They say, a widow, rich; and I'm a bachelor,
Worth nought: your fortunes may make me a man,
As mine ha' preserved you a woman. Think upon it,
And whether I have deserved you or no.
DAME P. I will, sir.
SUR. And, for these household rogues, let me alone
To treat with them.

Re-enter SUBTLE.

SUB. How doth my noble Diego,
And my dear madam countess?—Hath the count
Been courteous, lady? liberal and open?—
[DAME PLIANT *retires to the window.*
Donzel, methinks you look melancholic
After your coitum, and scurvy: truly,
I do not like the dulness of your eye;
It hath a heavy cast, 'tis upsee Dutch,
And says you are a lumpish whoremaster.
Be lighter: I will make your pockets so.
[*As he attempts to pick* SURLY'S *pocket,* SURLY *throws open his cloak and knocks him down.*
SUR. Will you, don bawd and pickpurse? How now! Reel you?
Stand up, sir; you shall find, since I am so heavy,
I'll gi' you equal weight.
SUB., *calling.* Help! murder!
SUR. No, sir,
There's no such thing intended. A good cart[38]
And a clean whip shall ease you of that fear.
I am the Spanish don that should be cozened,
Do you see! Cozened! Where's your Captain Face,
That parcel broker, and whole bawd, all rascal?

FACE *re-enters, dressed now in his uniform.*

FACE. How, Surly!

[36] disguise. [37] ability. [38] referring to the punishment for bawds.

SUR. O, make your approach, good captain.
I have found from whence your copper rings and spoons
Come now, wherewith you cheat abroad in taverns.
'Twas here you learned t' anoint your boot with brimstone,
Then rub men's gold on't for a kind of touch,
And say, 'twas naught, when you had changed the color,
That you might ha't for nothing. And this doctor,
Your sooty, smoky-bearded compeer, he
Will close you so much gold, in a bolt's-head,
And, on a turn, convey i' the stead another
With sublimed mercury, that shall burst i' the heat,
And fly out all *in fumo!* Then weeps Mammon;
Then swoons his worship. [FACE *slips out by the laboratory door.*] Or he is the Faustus,
That casteth figures and can conjure, cures
Plague, piles, and pox, by the ephemerides [39]
And holds intelligence with all the bawds
And midwives of three shires: while you send in—
Captain!—what! is he gone?—damsels with child,
Wives that are barren, or the waiting-maid
With the green sickness. [SUBTLE *also seeks to escape; but* SURLY *seizes him as he is sneaking away.*] Nay, sir, you must tarry,
Though he be scaped; and answer by the ears, sir.

Re-enter FACE *with* KASTRIL.

FACE. Why, now's the time, if ever you will quarrel
Well, as they say, and be a true-born child:
The doctor and your sister both are abused.[40]
KAS. Where is he? Which is he? He is a slave,
Whate'er he is, and the son of a whore.—Are you
The man, sir, I would know?
SUR. I should be loth, sir,
To confess so much.
KAS. Then you lie i' your throat.
SUR. How!
FACE, *to* KASTRIL. A very arrant rogue, sir, and a cheater,
Employed here by another conjurer
That does not love the doctor, and would cross him
If he knew how.
SUR. Sir, you are abused.
KAS. You lie;
And 'tis no matter.
FACE. Well said, sir! He is
The impudent'st rascal—
SUR. You are indeed.—Will you hear me, sir?
FACE By no means: bid him be gone.
KAS. Begone, sir, quickly.
SUR. This's strange!—Lady, do you inform your brother. [DAME PLIANT *talks apart to* KASTRIL.
FACE. There is not such a foist in all the town.
The doctor had him presently, and finds yet
The Spanish count will come here. <Bear up, Subtle.>
SUB. Yes, sir, he must appear within this hour.
FACE. And yet this rogue would come in a disguise,
By the temptation of another spirit,
To trouble our art, though he could not hurt it!
KAS. Ay,
I know. [*To his sister.*] Away, you talk like a foolish mauther.[41]
SUR. Sir, all is truth she says.
FACE. Do not believe him, sir:
He is the lying'st swabber!—Come your ways, sir.
SUR. You are valiant out of company!

[39] astrological almanacs.
[40] cheated.
[41] girl.

KAS. Yes, how then, sir?

Enter DRUGGER, *with a piece of damask*

FACE. Nay, here's an honest fellow too that knows him,
And all his tricks. <Make good what I say, Abel.
This cheater would ha' cozened thee o' the widow.>
He owes this honest Drugger here seven pound
He has had on him in twopenny'orths of tobacco.
DRUG. Yes, sir. And he hath damned himself three terms to pay me.
FACE. And what does he owe for lotium?
DRUG. Thirty shillings, sir;
And for six syringes.
SUR. Hydra of villainy!
FACE, *to* KASTRIL. <Nay, sir, you must quarrel him out o' the house.
KAS. I will.>
—Sir, if you get not out o' doors, you lie,
And you are a pimp.
SUR. Why, this is madness, sir,
Not valor in you; I must laugh at this.
KAS. It is my humor; you are a pimp and a trig,
And an Amadis de Gaul, or a Don Quixote.
DRUG. Or a knight o' the curious coxcomb, do you see.

Enter ANANIAS.

ANA. Peace to the household!
KAS. I'll keep peace for no man.
ANA. Casting of dollars is concluded lawful.
KAS. Is he the constable?
SUB. Peace, Ananias.
FACE. No, sir.
KAS. Then you are an otter, and a shad, a whit,
A very tim.
SUR. You'll hear me, sir?
KAS. I will not.
ANA. What is the motive?
SUB. Zeal in the young gentleman,
Against his Spanish slops.
ANA. They are profane,
Lewd, superstitious, and idolatrous breeches.
SUR. New rascals!
KAS. Will you be gone, sir?
ANA. Avoid, Sathan!
Thou art not of the light! That ruff of pride
About thy neck betrays thee; and is the same
With that which the unclean birds, in 'seventy-seven,
Were seen to prank it with on divers coasts:
Thou look'st like Antichrist, in that lewd hat.
SUR. I must give way.
KAS. Begone, sir
SUR. But I'll take
A course with you.—
ANA. Depart, proud Spanish fiend!
SUR. Captain and doctor.
ANA. Child of perdition!
KAS. Hence, sir!—[*Exit* SURLY.
Did I not quarrel bravely?
FACE. Yes, indeed, sir.
KAS. Nay, an I give my mind to't, I shall do't.
FACE. O, you must follow, sir, and threaten him tame:
He'll turn again else.
KAS. I'll re-turn him then. [*Exit.*

Re-enter DOL. *She talks apart with* DAME PLIANT, *yet listens to* FACE. SUBTLE *begins a whispered conversation with* ANANIAS.

FACE. Drugger, this rogue prevented us, for thee:
We had determined that thou should'st ha' come
In a Spanish suit, and ha' carried her so; and he,
A brokerly slave, goes, puts it on himself.
Hast brought the damask?
DRUG. Yes, sir.
FACE. Thou must borrow
A Spanish suit. Hast thou no credit with the players?

DRUG. Yes, sir; did you never see me play the Fool?
FACE. I know not, Nab. <Thou shalt, if I can help it.>
Hieronimo's[42] old cloak, ruff, and hat will serve;
I'll tell thee more when thou bring'st 'em.
[*Exit* DRUGGER.
ANA. Sir, I know.
The Spaniard hates the brethren, and hath spies [1431
Upon their actions: and that this was one
I make no scruple. But the holy synod
Have been in prayer and meditation for it;
And 'tis revealed no less to them than me,
That casting of money is most lawful.
SUB. True; [1440
But here I cannot do it: if the house
Should chance to be suspected, all would out,
And we be locked up in the Tower for ever,
To make gold there for th' state, never come out;
And then are you defeated.
ANA. I will tell
This to the elders and the weaker brethren, [1451
That the whole company of the separation
May join in humble prayer again.
SUB. And fasting.
[DOL *and* DAME PLIANT *go out through the private door.*
ANA. Yea, for some fitter place. The peace of mind
Rest with these walls! [1460
SUB. Thanks, courteous Ananias.
[*Exit* ANANIAS.
FACE. What did he come for?
SUB. About casting dollars,
Presently out of hand. And so I told him
A Spanish minister came here to spy,
Against the faithful—
FACE. I conceive. Come, Subtle,
Thou art so down upon the least disaster! [1470
How wouldst thou ha' done, if I had not helped thee out?
SUB. I thank thee, Face, for the angry boy, i' faith.
FACE. Who would ha' looked it should ha' been that rascal
Surly? He had dyed his beard and all. Well, sir.
Here's damask come to make you a suit.
SUB. Where's Drugger? [1480
FACE. He is gone to borrow me a Spanish habit;
I'll be the count now.
SUB. But where's the widow?
FACE. Within, with my lord's sister; Madam Dol
Is entertaining her.
SUB. By your favor, Face,
Now she is honest, I will stand again.
FACE. You will not offer it? [1490
SUB. Why?
FACE. Stand to your word,

Re-enter DOL *hastily.*

Or— <Here comes Dol. She knows—
SUB. Y'are tyrannous still.
FACE. Strict for my right.> How now, Dol! Hast told her
The Spanish count will come?
DOL. Yes; but another is come,
You little looked for! [1500
FACE. Who's that?
DOL. Your master:
The master of the house.
SUB. How, Dol!
FACE. She lies,
This is some trick. Come, leave your quiblins, Dorothy.
DOL. Look out and see. [FACE *goes to the window.*
SUB. Art thou in earnest? [1510
DOL. 'Slight!
Forty o' the neighbors are about him, talking.
FACE. 'Tis he, by this good day!
DOL. 'Twill prove ill day
For some on us.
FACE. We are undone, and taken.
DOL. Lost, I am afraid.
SUB. You said he would not come,

[42] A reference to Kyd's "Spanish Tragedy."

While there died one a week within the liberties.
FACE. No: 'twas within the walls.
SUB. Was't so? Cry you mercy. I thought the liberties. What shall we do now, Face?
FACE. Be silent: not a word, if he call or knock.
I'll into mine old shape again and meet him,
Of Jeremy, the butler. I' the meantime,
Do you two pack up all the goods and purchase [43]
That we can carry i' the two trunks. I'll keep him
Off for to-day, if I cannot longer; and then
At night, I'll ship you both away to Ratcliff,
Where we'll meet to-morrow, and then we'll share.
Let Mammon's brass and pewter keep the cellar;
We'll have another time for that. But, Dol,
Pray thee go heat a little water quickly;
Subtle must shave me. All my captain's beard
Must off, to make me appear smooth Jeremy. [*Exit* DOL *by the private door.*
You'll do't?
SUB. Yes, I'll shave you as well as I can.
FACE. And not cut my throat, but trim me?
SUB. You shall see, sir.

ACT FIVE

SCENE I

LOVEWIT *is standing outside his front door. As stated by* DOL, *he is surrounded by* NEIGHBORS. *He is a man well on in years, but, though old, active.*

LOVE. Has there been such resort, say you?
1 NEI. Daily, sir.
2 NEI. And nightly, too.
3 NEI. Ay, some as brave as lords.
4 NEI. Ladies and gentlewomen.
5 NEI. Citizens' wives.
1 NEI. And knights.
6 NEI. In coaches.
2 NEI. Yes, and oyster-women.
1 NEI. Beside other gallants.
3 NEI. Sailors' wives.
4 NEI. Tobacco men.
5 NEI. Another Pimlico.[1]
LOVE. What should my knave advance,
To draw this company? He hung out no banners
Of a strange calf with five legs to be seen,
Or a huge lobster with six claws?
6 NEI. No, sir.
3 NEI. We had gone in then, sir.
LOVE. He has no gift
Of teaching i' the nose [2] that e'er I knew of.
You saw no bills set up that promised cure
Of agues or the tooth-ache?
2 NEI. No such thing, sir!
LOVE. Nor heard a drum struck for baboons or puppets?
5 NEI. Neither, sir.
LOVE. What device should he bring forth now?
I love a teeming wit as I love my nourishment.
'Pray God he ha' not kept such open house
That he hath sold my hangings and my bedding!
I left him nothing else. If he have eat 'em,
A plague o' the moth, say I! Sure he has got
Some bawdy pictures to call all this ging; [3]
The Friar and the Nun; or the new motion [4]
Of the knight's courser covering the parson's mare;
The boy of six year old, with the great thing:
Or 't may be, he has the fleas that run at tilt

[43] booty.

[1] A summer resort.
[2] like a Puritan preacher.
[3] gang. [4] puppet show.

Upon a table, or some dog to dance.
When saw you him?
1 Nei. Who, sir, Jeremy?
2 Nei. Jeremy butler?
We saw him not this month.
Love. How!
4 Nei. Not these five weeks, sir.
Other Neighbors. These six weeks, at the least.
Love. You amaze me, neighbors!
5 Nei. Sure, if your worship know not where he is,
He's slipped away.
6 Nei. Pray God he be not made away!
Love. Ha! it's no time to question, then. [*He knocks.*
6 Nei. About
Some three weeks since I heard a doleful cry,
As I sat up a-mending my wife's stockings.
Love. This's strange that none will answer! Did'st thou hear
A cry, sayst thou?
6 Nei. Yes, sir, like unto a man
That had been strangled an hour and could not speak.
2 Nei. I heard it, too, just this day three weeks, at two o'clock
Next morning.
Love. These be miracles, or you make 'em so!
A man an hour strangled, and could not speak,
And both you heard him cry?
3 Nei. Yes, downward, sir.
Love. Thou art a wise fellow. Give me thy hand, I pray thee.
What trade art thou on?
3 Nei. A smith, an't please your worship.
Love. A smith! Then lend me thy help to get this door open.
3 Nei. That I will presently, sir; but fetch my tools— [*Exit.*
1 Nei. Sir, best to knock again afore you break it.
Love. I will. [*Knocks again.*

Enter Face, *clean-shaven, and in his butler's livery.*

Face. What mean you, sir?
1, 2, 4 Nei. O, here's Jeremy!
Face. Good sir, come from the door.
Love. Why, what's the matter?
Face. Yet farther, you are too near yet.
Love. I' the name of wonder,
What means the fellow?
Face. The house, sir, has been visited.
Love. What, with the plague? Stand thou then farther.
Face. No, sir;
I had it not.
Love. Who had it then? I left
None else but thee i' the house.
Face. Yes, sir, my fellow,
The cat that kept the buttery, had it on her
A week before I spied it; but I got her
Conveyed away i' the night: and so I shut
The house up for a month.
Love. How!
Face. Purposing then, sir,
To have burnt rose-vinegar, treacle, and tar,
And ha' made it sweet, that you should ne'er ha' known it;
Because I knew the news would but afflict you, sir.
Love. Breathe less, and farther off. Why, this is stranger:
The neighbors tell me all here that the doors
Have still been open—
Face. How, sir!
Love. Gallants, men and women,
And of all sorts, tag-rag, been seen to flock here
In threaves,[5] these ten weeks, as to a second Hogsden,
In days of Pimlico and Eye-bright.[6]
Face. Sir,
Their wisdoms will not say so.
Love. To-day they speak
Of coaches and gallants; one in a French hood
Went in, they tell me; and another was seen

[5] droves. [6] suburban taverns.

In a velvet gown at the window: divers more
Pass in and out.
FACE. They did pass through the doors then
Or walls, I assure their eyesights and their spectacles;
For here, sir, are the keys, and here have been,
In this my pocket, now above twenty days!
And, for before, I kept the fort alone there.
But that 'tis yet not deep i' the afternoon,
I should believe my neighbors had seen double
Through the black pot, and made these apparitions!
For, on my faith to your worship, for these three weeks
And upwards, the door has not been opened.
LOVE. Strange!
1 NEI. Good faith, I think I saw a coach.
2 NEI. And I too,
I'd ha' been sworn.
LOVE. Do you but think it now? And but one coach?
4 NEI. We cannot tell, sir: Jeremy
Is a very honest fellow.
FACE. Did you see me at all?
1 NEI. No; that we are sure on.
2 NEI. I'll be sworn o' that.
LOVE. Fine rogues to have your testimonies built on!

Re-enter THIRD NEIGHBOR, *with his tools.*

3 NEI. Is Jeremy come?
1 NEI. O yes; you may leave your tools;
We were deceived, he says.
2 NEI. He's had the keys;
And the door has been shut these three weeks.
3 NEI. Like enough.
LOVE. Peace, and get hence, you changelings.

Enter SURLY *and* MAMMON. SURLY *is indulging in the pleasant game of "I told you so."*

FACE. <Surly come,
And Mammon made acquainted! They'll tell all.
How shall I beat them off? What shall I do?
Nothing's more wretched than a guilty conscience.>
SUR. No, sir, he was a great physician. This,
It was no bawdy-house, but a mere
You knew the lord and his sister.
MAM. Nay, good Surly.—
SUR. The happy word, BE RICH—
MAM. Play not the tyrant.—
SUR. Should be to-day pronounced to all your friends.
And where be your andirons now? And your brass pots,
That should ha' been golden flagons and great wedges?
MAM. Let me but breathe.—What, they ha' shut their doors,
Methinks! [*He knocks.*
SUR. Ay, now 'tis holiday with them.
MAM., *shouting.* Rogues,
Cozeners, impostors, bawds!
FACE. What mean you, sir?
MAM. To enter if we can.
FACE. Another man's house!
Here is the owner, sir; turn you to him,
And speak your business.
MAM. Are you, sir, the owner?
LOVE. Yes, sir.
MAM. And are those knaves, within, your cheaters?
LOVE. What knaves, what cheaters?
MAM. Subtle and his Lungs.
FACE. The gentleman is distracted, sir! No lungs
Nor lights ha' been seen here these three weeks, sir,
Within these doors, upon my word.
SUR. Your word,
Groom arrogant!
FACE. Yes, sir, I am the housekeeper,

And know the keys ha' not been out o' my hands.
SUR. This's a new Face.
FACE. You do mistake the house, sir: What sign was't at?
SUR. You rascal! This is one Of the confederacy. Come, let's get officers,
And force the door.
LOVE. Pray you stay, gentlemen.
SUR. No, sir, we'll come with warrant.
MAM. Ay, and then We shall ha' your doors open. [*Exeunt* MAMMON *and* SURLY.
LOVE. What means this?
FACE. I cannot tell, sir.
1 NEI. These are two o' the gallants That we do think we saw.
FACE. Two o' the fools! You talk as idly as they. Good faith, sir, I think the moon has crazed 'em all.

Enter KASTRIL.

<O me,
The angry boy come too! He'll make a noise,
And ne'er away till he have betrayed us all.>
KAS., *knocking and shouting*. What, rogues, bawds, slaves! you'll open the door anon!—
Punk, cockatrice, my suster! By this light
I'll fetch the marshal to you. You are a whore
To keep your castle—
FACE. Who would you speak with, sir?
KAS. The bawdy doctor, and the cozening captain,
And puss my suster.
LOVE. This is something, sure.
FACE. Upon my trust, the doors were never open, sir.
KAS. I have heard all their tricks told me twice over,
By the fat knight and the lean gentleman.
LOVE. Here comes another.

Enter ANANIAS *and* TRIBULATION.

FACE. <Ananias too!
And his pastor!>
TRI. The doors are shut against us.
[*They beat at the door.*
ANA. Come forth, you seed of vipers, sons of Belial!
Your wickedness is broke forth; abomination
Is in the house.
KAS. My suster's there.
ANA. The place,
It is become a cage of unclean birds.
KAS. Ay, I will fetch the scavenger and the constable.
TRI. You shall do well.
ANA. We'll join to weed them out.
KAS., *calling*. You will not come then, punk devise, my suster?
ANA. Call her not sister; she is a harlot verily.
KAS. I'll raise the street.
LOVE. Good gentleman, a word.
ANA. Sathan avoid, and hinder not our zeal! [*Exeunt* ANANIAS, TRIBULATION *and* KASTRIL.
LOVE. The world's turned Bet'lem.[7]
FACE. These are all broke loose, Out of St. Katherine's, where they use to keep
The better sort of mad-folks.
1 NEI. All these persons We saw go in and out here.
2 NEI. Yes, indeed, sir.
3 NEI. These were the parties.
FACE. Peace, you drunkards!—Sir, I wonder at it. Please you to give me leave
To touch the door; I'll try an the lock be changed.
LOVE. It mazes me!
FACE. Good faith, sir, I believe There's no such thing: 'tis all *deceptio visus*.[8]
<Would I could get him away!>
DAP., *within*. Master captain! Master doctor!
LOVE. Who's that?
FACE. <Our clerk within, that I forgot!> I know not, sir.

[7] mad. [8] an optical illusion.

DAP., *within*. For God's sake, when will her grace be at leisure?
FACE. Ha!
Illusions, some spirit o' the air! <His gag is melted, [360
And now he sets out the throat.>
DAP., *within*. I am almost stifled—
FACE. <Would you were altogether.>
LOVE. 'Tis i' the house.
Ha! list.
FACE. Believe it, sir, i' the air.
LOVE. Peace, you.
DAP., *within*. Mine aunt's grace does not use me well.
SUB., *within*. You fool, [370
Peace, you'll mar all.
FACE, *speaking through the keyhole, while* LOVEWIT *advances to the door unobserved*. Or you will else, you rogue.
LOVE. O, is it so? Then you converse with spirits!
Come, sir. No more o' your tricks, good Jeremy:
The truth, the shortest way. [380
FACE. Dismiss this rabble, sir.
<What shall I do? I am catched.>
LOVE. Good neighbors,
I thank you all. You may depart. [*Exeunt Neighbors.*]—Come, sir,
You know that I am an indulgent master;
And therefore conceal nothing. What's your med'cine,
To draw so many several sorts of wild fowl? [391
FACE. Sir, you were wont to affect mirth and wit—
But here's no place to talk on't i' the street.
Give me but leave to make the best of my fortune,
And only pardon me th' abuse of your house [399
(It's all I beg), I'll help you to a widow,
In recompense, that you shall gi' me thanks for,
Will make you seven years younger, and a rich one.
'Tis but your putting on a Spanish cloak:
I have her within. You need not fear the house;
It was not visited.
LOVE. But by me, who came
Sooner than you expected. [410
FACE. It is true, sir.
'Pray you forgive me.
LOVE. Well: let's see your widow.
[*They go into the house.*

SCENE II

Soon after LOVEWIT *enters the house,* SUBTLE, *through the door conducting to the privy, brings* DAPPER *back into the room in which most of the business of the play has been conducted.* DAPPER *is still blindfolded.*

Two trunks have been added to the contents of the room.

SUB. How! ha' you eaten your gag?
DAP. Yes, faith, it crumbled
Away i' my mouth. [11
SUB. You ha' spoiled all then.
DAP. No!
I hope my aunt of Fairy will forgive me.
SUB. Your aunt's a gracious lady; but in truth
You were to blame.
DAP. The fume did overcome me,
And I did do't to stay my stomach. 'Pray you [20
So satisfy her grace.

Enter FACE *in his uniform, by the private door.*

Here comes the captain.
FACE How now! Is his mouth down?
SUB. Ay, he has spoken!
FACE. A pox, I heard him, and you too. He's undone then.
<I have been fain to say, the house is haunted [30
With spirits, to keep churl back.
SUB. And hast thou done it?
FACE. Sure, for this night.
SUB. Why, then triumph and sin
Of Face so famous, the precious king
Of present wits.
FACE. Did you not hear the coil
About the door?
SUB. Yes, and I dwindled with it. [39

FACE. Show him his aunt, and let him be dispatched:
I'll send her to you. [*Exit* FACE *by the private door.*
SUB. Well, sir, your aunt her grace
Will give you audience presently, on my suit
And the captain's word that you did not eat your gag
In any contempt of her highness. [*Unbinds his eyes.* [50
DAP. Not I, in troth, sir.

DOL, *habited like the Queen of Fairy, enters by the private door.*

SUB. Here she is come. Down o' your knees and wriggle:
She has a stately presence. [DAPPER *kneels and shuffles towards her.*] Good! Yet nearer,
And bid, God save her!
DAP. Madam! [60
SUB. And your aunt.
DAP. And my most gracious aunt, God save your grace.
DOL. Nephew, we thought to have been angry with you;
But that sweet face of yours hath turned the tide,
And made it flow with joy, that ebbed of love.
Arise, and touch our velvet gown. [70
SUB. The skirts,
And kiss 'em. So!
DOL. Let me now stroke that head.
Much, nephew, shalt thou win, much shalt thou spend;
Much shalt thou give away, much shalt thou lend.
SUB. <Ay, much! indeed.> Why do you not thank her grace?
DAP. I cannot speak for joy. [80
SUB. See, the kind wretch!
Your grace's kinsman right.
DOL. Give me the bird.—
Here is your fly in a purse, about your neck, cousin;
Wear it, and feed it about this day sev'n night,
On your right wrist—
SUB. Open a vein with a pin
And let it suck but once a week; till then,
You must not look on't. [91
DOL. No: and, kinsman,
Bear yourself worthy of the blood you come on.
SUB. Her grace would ha' you eat no more Woolsack pies,
Nor Dagger[9] frumenty.
DOL. Nor break his fast
In Heaven and Hell. [99
SUB. She's with you everywhere!
Nor play with costermongers at mumchance, traytrip,
God-make-you-rich (whenas your aunt has done it); but keep
The gallant'st company, and the best games—
DAP. Yes, sir.
SUB. Gleek and primero; and, what you get, be true to us.
DAP. By this hand, I will. [110
SUB. You may bring's a thousand pound
Before to-morrow night, if but three thousand
Be stirring, if you will.
DAP. I swear I will then.
SUB. Your fly will learn you all games.
FACE, *within.* Ha' you done there?
SUB. Your grace will command him no more duties? [120
DOL. No:
But come and see me often. I may chance
To leave him three or four hundred chests of treasure,
And some five thousand acres of fairy land,
If he game well and comely with good gamesters.
SUB. There's a kind aunt: kiss her departing part.— [131
But you must sell your forty mark a year now.
DAP. Ay, sir, I mean.
SUB. Or gi't away, a pox on't!
DAP. I'll gi't mine aunt. I'll go and fetch the writings.
SUB. 'Tis well; away. [*Exit* DAPPER.

[9] The Woolsack and the Dagger are inns, as are Heaven and Hell.

Re-enter FACE.

FACE. Where's Subtle?
SUB. Here: what news?
FACE. Drugger is at the door; go take his suit,
And bid him fetch a parson presently.
Say he shall marry the widow. Thou shalt spend
A hundred pound by the service! [*Exit* SUBTLE.] Now, Queen Dol,
Ha' you packed up all?
DOL. Yes.
FACE. And how do you like
The Lady Pliant?
DOL. A good dull innocent.

Re-enter SUBTLE.

SUB. Here's your Hieronimo's cloak and hat.
FACE. Give me 'em.
SUB. And the ruff too?
FACE. Yes; I'll come to you presently. [*Exit.*
SUB. Now he is gone about his project, Dol,
I told you of, for the widow.
DOL. 'Tis direct
Against our articles.
SUB. Well, we'll fit him, wench.
Hast thou gulled her of her jewels or her bracelets?
DOL. No; but I will do't.
SUB. Soon at night, my Dolly,
When we are shipped and all our goods aboard,
Eastward for Ratcliff, we will turn our course
To Brainford, westward, if thou sayst the word,
And take our leaves of this o'erweening rascal,
This peremptory Face.
DOL. Content; I am weary of him.
SUB. Thou hast cause, when the slave will run a-wiving, Dol,
Against the instrument that was drawn between us.
DOL. I'll pluck his bird as bare as I can.
SUB. Yes, tell her
She must by any means address some present
To th' cunning man, make him amends for wronging
His art with her suspicion; send a ring,
Or chain of pearl; she will be tortured else
Extremely in her sleep, say, and ha' strange things
Come to her. Wilt thou?
DOL. Yes.
SUB. My fine flitter-mouse,[10]
My bird o' the night! We'll tickle it at the Pigeons,[11]
When we have all, and may unlock the trunks,
And say, this's mine, and thine, and thine, and mine. [*They kiss.*

Re-enter FACE.

FACE. What now! a-billing?
SUB. Yes, a little exalted
In the good passage of our stock-affairs.
FACE. Drugger has brought his parson; take him in, Subtle,
And send him[12] back again to wash his face.
SUB. I will: and shave himself?
FACE. If you can get him. [*Exit* SUBTLE.
DOL. You are hot upon it, Face, whate'er it is!
FACE. A trick that Dol shall spend ten pound a month by.

Re-enter SUBTLE.

Is he gone?
SUB. The chaplain waits you i' the hall, sir.
FACE. I'll go bestow him. [*Exit.*
DOL. He'll now marry her instantly.
SUB. He cannot yet, he is not ready. Dear Dol,
Cozen her of all thou canst. To deceive him
Is no deceit, but justice, that would break
Such an inextricable tie as ours was.
DOL. Let me alone to fit him.

[10] bat.
[11] an inn at Brentford.
[12] Nab.

Re-enter FACE.

FACE. Come, my venturers,
You ha' packed up all? Where be the trunks? Bring forth.
SUB. Here.
FACE. Let us see 'em. Where's the money? [240
SUB. Here,
In this.
FACE. Mammon's ten pound; eight score before:
The brethren's money this. Drugger's and Dapper's.
What paper's that?
DOL. The jewel of the waiting-maid's,
That stole it from her lady, to know certain— [251
FACE. If she should have precedence of her mistress?
DOL. Yes.
FACE. What box is that?
SUB. The fish-wives' rings, I think,
And th' ale-wives' single money.[13] Is't not, Dol?
DOL. Yes; and the whistle that the sailor's wife [260
Brought you to know an her husband were with Ward.[14]
FACE. We'll wet it to-morrow; and our silver beakers
And tavern cups. Where be the French petticoats
And girdles and hangers?
SUB. Here, i' the trunk,
And the bolts of lawn.
FACE. Is Drugger's damask there,
And the tobacco? [271
SUB. Yes.
FACE. Give me the keys.
DOL. Why you the keys?
SUB. No matter, Dol; because
We shall not open 'em before he comes.
FACE. 'Tis true, you shall not open them, indeed;
Nor have 'em forth, do you see? Not forth, Dol. [280
DOL. No!
FACE. No, my smock-rampant. The right is, my master
Knows all, has pardoned me, and he will keep 'em.
Doctor, 'tis true—you look—for all your figures:
I sent for him, indeed. Wherefore, good partners, [289
Both he and she, be satisfied: for here
Determines the indenture tripartite
'Twixt Subtle, Dol, and Face. All I can do
Is to help you over the wall, o' the backside,
Or lend you a sheet to save your velvet gown, Dol.
Here will be officers presently; bethink you
Of some course suddenly to scape the dock; [301
For thither you'll come else. [*Some knock.*] Hark you, thunder.
SUB. You are a precious fiend!
OFFI., *without.* Open the door.
FACE. Dol, I am sorry for thee, i' faith; but hear'st thou?
It shall go hard but I will place thee somewhere:
Thou shalt ha' my letter to Mistress Amo— [311
DOL. Hang you.
FACE. Or Madam Imperial.
DOL. Pox upon you, rogue!
Would I had but time to beat thee!
FACE. Subtle,
Let's know where you set up next; I'll send you
A customer now and then, for old acquaintance. [320
What new course have you?
SUB. Rogue, I'll hang myself;
That I may walk a greater devil than thou,
And haunt thee i' the flock-bed and the buttery. [*Goes out with* DOL *by the back door.*

[13] small change. [14] a famous pirate.

SCENE III

LOVEWIT *is in a room opening onto the front door. He is in a Spanish costume and has the parson with him. The knocking heard in the previous scene is resumed.*

LOVE. What do you mean, my masters?
MAM., *without*. Open your door,
Cheaters, bawds, conjurers.
OFFI., *without*. Or we'll break it open.
LOVE. What warrant have you?
OFFI., *without*. Warrant enough, sir, doubt not,
If you'll not open it.
LOVE. Is there an officer there?
OFFI., *without*. Yes, two or three for failing.
LOVE. Have but patience,
And I will open it straight.

Enter, from within, FACE, *as* JEREMY *once more.*

FACE. Sir, ha' you done?
Is it a marriage? Perfect?
LOVE. Yes, my brain.
FACE. Off with your ruff and cloak then; be yourself, sir.
SUR., *without*. Down with the door.
KAS., *without*. 'Slight! ding it open.
LOVE., *opening the door*. Hold,
Hold, gentlemen, what means this violence?

MAMMON, SURLY, KASTRIL, ANANIAS, TRIBULATION *and Officers rush in.*

MAM. Where is this collier?
SUR. And my Captain Face?
MAM. These day-owls.
SUR. That are birding in men's purses.
MAM. Madam Suppository.
KAS. Doxy, my suster.
ANA. Locusts
Of the foul pit.
TRI. Profane as Bel and the Dragon.
ANA. Worse than the grasshoppers or the lice of Egypt.
LOVE. Good gentlemen, hear me.—Are you officers,
And cannot stay this violence?
1 OFFI. Keep the peace.
LOVE. Gentlemen, what is the matter? Whom do you seek?
MAM. The chemical cozener.
SUR. And the captain pander.
KAS. The nun my suster.
MAM. Madam Rabbi.
ANA. Scorpions
And caterpillars.
LOVE. Fewer at once, I pray you.
1 OFFI. One after another, gentlemen, I charge you,
By virtue of my staff.
ANA. They are the vessels
Of shame and of dishonor.
LOVE. Good zeal, lie still
A little while.
TRI. Peace, Deacon Ananias.
LOVE. The house is mine here, and the doors are open;
If there be any such persons as you seek for,
Use your authority; search on, o' God's name,
I am but newly come to town, and, finding
This tumult 'bout my door, to tell you true,
It somewhat mazed me; till my man here, fearing
My more displeasure, told me he had done
Somewhat an insolent part, let out my house
(Belike presuming on my known aversion
From any air o' the town while there was sickness)
To a doctor and a captain: who, what they, are,
Or where they be, he knows not.
MAM. Are they gone?
LOVE. You may go in and search, sir. [MAMMON, ANANIAS, *and* TRIBULATION *rush in.*] Here, I find
The empty walls worse than I left 'em, smoked;
A few cracked pots and glasses and a furnace;
The ceiling filled with poesies of the candle,
And "Madam with a dildo" writ o' the walls.
Only one gentlewoman I met here
That is within, that said she was a widow—
KAS. Ay, that's my suster; I'll go thump her. Where is she? [*Goes in.*

LOVE. And should ha' married a Spanish count; but he,
When he came to't, neglected her so grossly,
That I, a widower, am gone through with her.
SUR. How! have I lost her then?
LOVE. Were you the don, sir?
Good faith, now she does blame you extremely, and says
You swore, and told her you had ta'en the pains
To dye your beard, and umber o'er your face,
Borrowed a suit and ruff, all for her love;
And then did nothing. What an oversight
And want of putting forward, sir, was this!
Well fare an old harquebusier yet,
Could prime his powder, and give fire, and hit,
All in a twinkling!

Re-enter MAMMON.

MAM. The whole nest are fled!
LOVE. What sort of birds were they?
MAM. A kind of choughs,
Or thievish daws, sir, that have picked my purse,
Of eight score and ten pounds within these five weeks,
Beside my first materials; and my goods,
That lie i' the cellar, which I am glad they have left,
I may have home yet.
LOVE. Think you so, sir?
MAM. Ay.
LOVE. By order of law, sir, but not otherwise.
MAM. Not mine own stuff!
LOVE. Sir, I can take no knowledge
That they are yours, but by public means.
If you can bring certificate that you were gulled of 'em,
Or any formal writ out of a court
That you did cozen yourself, I will not hold them.
MAM. I'll rather lose 'em.
LOVE. That you shall not, sir,
By me, in troth; upon these terms, they are yours.
What, should they ha' been, sir, turned into gold, all?
MAM. No.—
I cannot tell.—It may be they should.—What then?
LOVE. What a great loss in hope have you sustained!
MAM. Not I; the commonwealth has.
FACE. Ay, he would ha' built
The city new; and made a ditch about it
Of silver, should have run with cream from Hogsden;
That every Sunday in Moorfields the younkers,
And tits[15] and tom-boys should have fed on, gratis.
MAM. I will go mount a turnip-cart, and preach
The end o' the world within these two months.—Surly,
What! in a dream?
SUR. Must I needs cheat myself
With that same foolish vice of honesty!—
Come, let us go and hearken out the rogues:
That Face I'll mark for mine, if e'er I meet him.
FACE. If I can hear of him, sir, I'll bring you word
Unto your lodging; for, in troth, they were strangers
To me; I thought 'em honest as myself, sir. [MAMMON *and* SURLY *depart.*

Re-enter ANANIAS *and* TRIBULATION.

TRI. 'Tis well; the saints shall not lose all yet. Go
And get some carts—
LOVE. For what, my zealous friends?
ANA. To bear away the portion of the righteous
Out of this den of thieves.
LOVE. What is that portion?
ANA. The goods sometimes the orphans', that the brethren
Bought with their silver pence.
LOVE. What, those i' the cellar
The knight Sir Mammon claims?

[15] wenches.

ANA. I do defy
The wicked Mammon; so do all the brethren,
Thou profane man! I ask thee with what conscience [209
Thou canst advance that nimrod against us,
That have the seal? Were not the shillings numbered
That made the pounds? were not the pounds told out
Upon the second day of the fourth week,
In the eighth month, upon the table dormant,
The year of the last patience of the saints, [220
Six hundred and ten?
LOVE. Mine earnest vehement botcher,
And deacon also, I cannot dispute with you:
But, if you get you not away the sooner,
I shall confute you with a cudgel.
ANA. Sir!
TRI. Be patient, Ananias.
ANA. I am strong,
And will stand up, well girt, against [230 an host
That threaten Gad in exile.
LOVE. I shall send you
To Amsterdam, to your cellar.
ANA. I will pray there,
Against thy house. May dogs defile thy walls,
And wasps and hornets breed beneath thy roof, [239
This seat of falsehood, and this cave of coz'nage! [*Exeunt* ANANIAS *and* TRIBULATION.

As they go out, DRUGGER *enters.*

LOVE. Another too?
DRUG. Not I, sir, I am no brother.
LOVE., *beating him.* Away, you Harry Nicholas![16] do you talk? [*Exit* DRUGGER.
FACE. No, this was Abel Drugger.—[*To the* PARSON.] Good sir, go. [250
And satisfy him; tell him all is done:
He stayed too long a-washing of his face.
The doctor, he shall hear of him at Westchester;
And of the captain, tell him, at Yarmouth, or
Some good port-town else, lying for a wind.— [*Exit* PARSON.
If you can get off the angry child now, sir— [260

Re-enter KASTRIL, *dragging in his sister.*

KAS. Come on, you ewe, you have matched most sweetly, ha' you not?
Did not I say, I would never ha' you tupped
But by a dubbed boy,[17] to make you a lady-tom?
'Slight, you are a mammet![18] O, I could touse you now. [270
Death, mun you marry with a pox!
LOVE. You lie, boy;
As sound as you; and I'm aforehand with you.
KAS. Anon!
LOVE. Come, will you quarrel? I will feize[19] you, sirrah; [*Offers to fight him.*
Why do you not buckle to your tools?
KAS. God's light, [280
This is a fine old boy as e'er I saw!
LOVE. What, do you change your copy now? Proceed;
Here stands my dove: stoop at her if you dare.
KAS. 'Slight, I must love him! I cannot choose, i' faith,
An I should be hanged for't! Suster, I protest,
I honor thee for this match. [290
LOVE. O, do you so, sir?
KAS. Yes, an thou canst take tobacco and drink, old boy,
I'll give her five hundred pound more to her marriage,
Than her own state.
LOVE. Fill a pipe full, Jeremy.
FACE. Yes; but go in and take it, sir.
LOVE. We will.
I will be ruled by thee in anything, Jeremy. [301

[16] The founder of the sect called "The Family of Love."

[17] knight. [18] puppet. [19] beat.

KAS. 'Slight, thou art not hide-bound, thou art a jovy boy!
Come, let's in, pray thee, and take our whiffs.
LOVE. Whiff in with your sister, brother boy.—[KASTRIL *and* DAME PLIANT *go in.*] That master
That had received such happiness by a servant,
In such a widow and with so much wealth,
Were very ungrateful if he would not be
A little indulgent to that servant's wit,
And help his fortune, though with some small strain
Or his own candor.—[*Advancing.*] Therefore, gentlemen,
And kind spectators, if I have outstripped
An old man's gravity or strict canon, think
What a young wife and a good brain may do;
Stretch age's truth sometimes, and crack it too.—
Speak for thyself, knave.
FACE. So I will, sir.—[*Advancing to the front of the stage.*] Gentlemen,
My part a little fell in this last scene,
Yet 'twas decorum.[20] And, though I am clean
Got off from Subtle, Surly, Mammon, Dol,
Hot Ananias, Dapper, Drugger, all
With whom I traded; yet I put myself
On you, that are my country; and this pelf
Which I have got, if you do quit me, rests,
To feast you often and invite new guests.

[20] dramatic propriety.

THE KNIGHT OF THE BURNING PESTLE

BY

FRANCIS BEAUMONT

AND

JOHN FLETCHER

INTRODUCTION

The date of the greatest burlesque of the period has been much debated. As it was published in 1613, and had then been held for two years, it certainly was produced not later than 1611. The two years for which really strong claims have been made are 1607 and 1610. The arguments pro and con in each case are given at some length in the editor's "Plays of Beaumont and Fletcher," where a verdict is rendered in favor of 1610.

With this question of date is mixed the problem of the play's relation to Cervantes' masterpiece. The publisher of the first quarto denies that it is "of the race of Don Quixote," and declares it to be "his elder above a year." Precisely what that means it is not easy to say: probably it means that the play was produced above a year before the publication of the English translation of "Don Quixote," in 1612. If so, the statement fits in much better with production in 1610 than with performance in 1607; for "above a year" might mean anything up to a couple of years, but could hardly mean so long a period as five years. But the delay in the publication of the English translation of the Spanish story does not preclude the possibility of the play's indebtedness in 1610 or even in 1607. There seems, however, no good reason for believing that the author or authors of the play had ever read "Don Quixote" either in the original or in a translation. This has been ably argued by Dr. H. S. Murch in his edition of the play. The one remarkable parallel is the treatment of an inn as a castle, and the shattering of the knight's illusion (in the one case; his pretense, in the other) when the innkeeper makes a demand for payment. This may be taken as almost sure proof that the author or authors had heard of "Don Quixote" or of at least that incident in it; but it does not prove that he or they had actually read it. Would not Sancho Panza, in that case, have undergone a reincarnation? The play is, indeed, based rather on the romances on which "Don Quixote" is based than on "Don Quixote" itself. That the indebtedness is not direct is indicated by the fact that the spirit actuating the play is altogether dissimilar from the spirit actuating the story.

The date and the connection with the Cervantes story are not the only vexed questions in regard to "The Knight;" there is also the

question of the authorship: is it the work of one man or the work of two? The question used to be further complicated by the uncertainty whether, if there was but one author, that one was Beaumont or Fletcher. To-day the problem is: did Beaumont, whose paramount responsibility is generally recognized, receive any assistance from Fletcher? The external evidence leaves the matter in doubt. Burre, the publisher of the original quarto, speaks once of the play's "parents" and twice of its "father." As an independent writer in 1614 speaks of "the writer" of the play, the balance of evidence may be held to favor a single author; but a complication arises from the fact that the address to the readers in the second quarto (1635) speaks of the author as if he were alive. It seems to give us the voice of the author; and it may be that it was written for an intended earlier edition that did not come to publication, perhaps even for that of 1613. The second quarto is the earliest authority for the attribution of the play to Beaumont and Fletcher, the earlier quarto being anonymous.

The play may be judged by the internal evidence to have been originally Beaumont's; but there certainly does seem to be some work of Fletcher's incorporated in IV 4. It may be the outcome of a revision shortly before publication in 1613, or it may have been done, with Beaumont's consent, prior to the play's first production, or there is another possible explanation, to be considered later. There are a few lines elsewhere that seem to smack of Fletcher; but, though they are not sufficient in number to warrant an attribution to him of the scenes in which they occur, they are numerous enough to be perturbing. It may be well to sum up thus: that, while Beaumont is present in every scene, Fletcher is assuredly to be seen in one, and may perhaps have helped elsewhere.

A possibility which seems never to have been considered is that Beaumont may in 1610 have taken up an early joint effort by himself and his partner, perhaps produced without success, perhaps never even brought to production, cut it down mercilessly, and introduced into it the Citizen, his Wife, and Ralph. If so, what is in Fletcher's manner is not matter added by him, but remains of his original contribution. Such a supposition may help to account for the inconsistency of the first publisher in speaking of the play's "parents" and of its "father." It is not put forward here as a considered theory, but only as a suggestion which it may be worth the while of some student to seek to prove or disprove.

The play's distinction is dependent upon the highly humorous delineation of the Citizen and his Wife. It is scarcely possible to find anywhere in drama a more delightful couple, more thoroughly true to themselves and their class. We feel that there is not a line they speak

that is not such as they might have spoken. The comic spirit is implicit in them from their first appearance among the audience to their happy and triumphant departure. Had Beaumont created no other character but these, he would be deserving of a great place in the English theatre. The Wife, especially, with her wonderful faculty for bestowing her sympathy on the side least deserving it, is one of the greatest of all dramatic creations. There is plenty of the *vis comica* too in Merrythought, who had undoubtedly great deficiencies as a husband, but makes a delightful stage character. There is amusing burlesque verse for the part of Humphrey, and Jasper and Luce have some really beautiful lines, which can only be characterized as a fine fraud, since there is no earnestness in them.

It may be mentioned that the name Ralph is to be pronounced "Rafe," otherwise the student will miss the joke in the interlude between II and III and one of the rhymes in the scene in the Court of Moldavia.

The play's technique was entirely novel. It is frequently said that it was anticipated by "The Old Wives' Tale;" but the conception of the two is altogether different: in the one, the people whose story is being told step on to the stage to act their parts, thus turning a narrative into a dramatic production; in the other, members of the audience interrupt a performance of a play and graft upon it an extraneous story—one quite foreign to the original design. It is, then, difficult to understand why Peele's play should ever have been regarded as a precursor of "The Knight of the Burning Pestle."

CHARACTERS

Speaker of the Prologue.
A Citizen.
His Wife.
Ralph, *his Apprentice.*
Boys.
Venturewell, *a Merchant.*
Humphrey.
Merrythought.
Jasper, Michael } *His Sons.*
Luce, *Daughter of Venturewell.*
Mistress Merrythought.
Tim, George } *Apprentices.*
Host.
Tapster.
Barber.
Three Men, *supposed captives.*
Sergeant.
William Hammerton.
George Greengoose.
A Woman, *supposed a captive.*
Pompiona, *Daughter of the King of Moldavia.*
Soldiers, and Attendants.

Place: *London and the vicinity, with the exception of one scene in Moldavia.*
Time: *Beaumont's own day.*

THE KNIGHT OF THE BURNING PESTLE

INDUCTION

An audience is gathered in one of the London theatres to witness a production of a play entitled "The London Merchant." According to the practice in Elizabethan and Jacobean days, some gentlemen who form a portion of the audience are seated upon stools on the stage. Among those seated below are a CITIZEN, *his* WIFE, *and his apprentice* RALPH, *all destined to play a large part in the drama.* [11

Enter SPEAKER OF THE PROLOGUE.

PRO. From all that's near the court, from all that's great,
Within the compass of the city-walls,
We now have brought our scene—

The CITIZEN *leaps on the stage.*

CIT. *Hold your peace, goodman boy!*

PRO. *What do you mean, sir!* [19

CIT. *That you have no good meaning. This seven years there hath been plays at this house, I have observed it; you have still girds at citizens; and now you call your play "The London Merchant". Down with your title, boy! down with your title!*

PRO. *Are you a member of the noble city?*

CIT. *I am.*

PRO. *And a freeman?* [30

CIT. *Yea, and a grocer.*

PRO. *So, grocer, then, by your sweet favor, we intend no abuse to the city.*

CIT. *No, sir? yes, sir: if you were not resolved to play the jacks,*[1] *what need you study for new subjects, purposely to abuse your betters? why could not you be contented, as well as others, with "The Legend of Whittington", or "The Life and* [39

[1] mockers.

Death of Sir Thomas Gresham, with the building of the Royal Exchange", or "The Story of Queen Eleanor, with the rearing of London Bridge upon Woolsacks"?

PRO. *You seem to be an understanding man: what would you have us do, sir?*

CIT. *Why, present something notably in honor of the commons of the city.*

PRO. *Why, what do you say to "The Life and Death of Fat Drake, or the Repairing of Fleet privies"?* [50

CIT. *I do not like that; but I will have a citizen, and he shall be of my own trade.*

PRO. *Oh, you should have told us your mind a month since; our play is ready to begin now.*

CIT. *'Tis all one for that; I will have a grocer, and he shall do admirable things.*

PRO. *What will you have him do?*

CIT. *Marry, I will have him—* [60

WIFE, below. *Husband, husband!*

RAL., below. *Peace, mistress.*

WIFE, below. *Hold thy peace, Ralph; I know what I do, I warrant 'ee.—Husband, husband!*

CIT. *What sayst thou, cony!*

WIFE. *Let him kill a lion with a pestle, husband! let him kill a lion with a pestle!*

CIT. *So he shall.—I'll have him kill a lion with a pestle.* [70

WIFE. *Husband! shall I come up, husband?*

CIT. *Ay, cony,—Ralph, help your mistress this way.—Pray, gentlemen, make her a little room.*—[To one of the Gentlemen.] *I pray you, sir, lend me your hand to help up my wife.* [The required assistance is forthcoming, and, with the help also of RALPH, the WIFE is got up on the stage.] *I thank you, sir.—So.* [80

WIFE. *By your leave, gentlemen all; I'm something troublesome: I'm a*

stranger here; I was ne'er at one of these plays, as they say, before; but I should have seen "Jane Shore" once; and my husband hath promised me, any time this twelvemonth, to carry me to "The Bold Beauchamps," but in truth he did not. I pray you, bear with me. [89

CIT. *Boy, let my wife and I have a couple of stools, and then begin; and let the grocer do rare things.* [Stools are brought; but the CITIZEN and his WIFE do not yet seat themselves.

PRO. *But, sir, we have never a boy to play him: every one hath a part already.*

WIFE. *Husband, husband, for God's sake, let Ralph play him! beshrew me, if I do not think he will go beyond them all.* [99

CIT. *Well remembered, wife.—Come up, Ralph.—I'll tell you, gentlemen; let them but lend him a suit of reparel and necessaries, and, by gad, if any of them all blow wind in the tail on him, I'll be hanged.* [RALPH gets up on the Stage.

WIFE. *I pray you, youth, let him have a suit of reparel.—I'll be sworn, gentlemen, my husband tells you true: he will act you sometimes at our house that all the neighbors cry out on him; he will* [110 *fetch you up a couraging part so in the garret, that we are all as feared, I warrant you, that we quake again: we'll fear our children with him; if they be never so unruly, do but cry, "Ralph comes, Ralph comes!" to them, and they'll be as quiet as lambs.—Hold up thy head, Ralph; show the gentlemen what thou canst do; speak a huffing part; I warrant you, the gentlemen will accept of it.* [120

CIT. *Do, Ralph, do.* [RALPH proceeds to give a sample of his powers by thundering, not altogether accurately, a passage from "Henry IV."

RAL. *"By Heaven, methinks, it were an easy leap*
To pluck bright honor from the pale-faced moon;
Or dive into the bottom of the sea,
Where never fathom-line touched any ground, [131
And pluck up drownëd honor from the lake of hell."

CIT. *How say you, gentlemen, is it not as I told you?*

WIFE. *Nay, gentlemen, he hath played before, my husband says, Mucedorus, before the wardens of our company.*

CIT. *Ay, and he should have played Jeronimo with a shoemaker for a wager.*

PRO. *He shall have a suit of apparel, if he will go in.* [142

CIT. *In, Ralph; in, Ralph; and set out the grocery in their kind, if thou lovest me.* [*Exit* RALPH.

WIFE. *I warrant, our Ralph will look finely when he's dressed.*

PRO. *But what will you have it called?*

CIT. *"The Grocer's Honor."*

PRO. *Methinks "The Knight of the* [150 *Burning Pestle" were better.*

WIFE. *I'll be sworn, husband, that's as good a name as can be.*

CIT. *Let it be so.—Begin, begin; my wife and I will sit down.*

PRO. *I pray you, do.*

CIT. *What stately music have you? you have shawms?*

PRO. *Shawms! no.* [159

CIT. *No? I'm a thief, if my mind did not give me so. Ralph plays a stately part, and he must needs have shawms: I'll be at the charge of them myself, rather than we'll be without them.*

PRO. *So you are like to be.*

CIT. *Why, and so I will be:* [giving money] *there's two shillings; let's have the waits of Southwark; they are as rare fellows as any are in England; and that will fetch them all o'er the water, with a vengeance, as if they were mad.* [171

PRO. *You shall have them. Will you sit down, then?*

CIT. *Ay.—Come, wife.*

WIFE. *Sit you merry all, gentlemen; I'm bold to sit amongst you for my ease.*

[CITIZEN and WIFE sit down. At last the SPEAKER OF THE PROLOGUE is able to get on with his introductory matter. [180

PRO. From all that's near the court, from all that's great
Within the compass of the city-walls,

We now have brought our scene. Fly far from hence
All private taxes,[2] immodest phrases,
Whatever may but show like viciöus!
For wicked mirth never true pleasure brings,
But honest minds are pleased with honest things.—

Thus much for that we do; but for Ralph's part you must answer for yourself.

Cit. *Take you no care for Ralph; he'll discharge himself, I warrant you.* [Exit Speaker of Prologue.

Wife. *I' faith, gentlemen, I'll give my word for Ralph.*

ACT ONE

Scene I

The play proper begins in the house of the merchant Venturewell, *whose apprentice,* Jasper, *has earned his displeasure by becoming enamored of his master's daughter.*

Vent. Sirrah, I'll make you know you are my prentice,
And whom my charitable love redeemed
Even from the fall of fortune; gave thee heat
And growth, to be what now thou art; new-cast thee,
Adding the trust of all I have, at home,
In foreign staples, or upon the sea,
To thy direction; tied the good opinions
Both of myself and friends to thy endeavors;
So fair were thy beginnings, but with these,
As I remember, you had never charge
To love your master's daughter, and even then
When I had found a wealthy husband for her;
I take it, sir, you had not; but, however,[1]
I'll break the neck of that commissiön,
And make you know you are but a merchant's factor.

Jas. Sir, I do liberally confess I am yours,
Bound both by love and duty to your service,
In which my labor hath been all my profit:
I have not lost in bargain, nor delighted
To wear your honest gains upon my back;
Nor have I given a pension to my blood,
Or lavishly in play consumed your stock;
These, and the miseries that do attend them,
I dare with innocence proclaim are strangers
To all my temperate actions. For your daughter,
If there be any love to my deservings
Borne by her virtuous self, I cannot stop it;
Nor am I able to refrain her wishes.
She's private to herself, and best of knowledge
Whom she will make so happy as to sigh for:
Besides, I cannot think you mean to match her
Unto a fellow of so lame a presence,
One that hath little left of nature in him.

Vent. 'Tis very well, sir: I can tell your wisdom
How all this shall be cured.

Jas. Your care becomes you.

Vent. And thus it must be, sir: I here discharge you
My house and service; take your liberty;
And when I want a son, I'll send for you.

[*Exit.*

Jas. These be the fair rewards of them that love!
Oh, you that live in freedom, never prove
The travail of a mind led by desire!

Enter Luce.

Luce. Why, how now, friend? struck with my father's thunder?

Jas. Struck, and struck dead, unless the remedy
Be full of speed and virtue; I am now,
What I expected long, no more your father's.

Luce. But mine.

[2] accusations.
[1] in any case.

JAS. But yours, and only yours, I am;
That's all I have to keep me from the statute.
You dare be constant still?
LUCE. Oh, fear me not!
In this I dare be better than a woman;
Nor shall his anger nor his offers move me,
Were they both equal to a prince's power.
JAS. You know my rival?
LUCE. Yes, and love him dearly,
Even as I love an ague or foul weather:
I prithee, Jasper, fear him not.
JAS. Oh, no!
I do not mean to do him so much kindness.
But to our own desires: you know the plot
We both agreed on?
LUCE. Yes, and will perform
My part exactly.
JAS. I desire no more.
Farewell, and keep my heart; 'tis yours.
LUCE. I take it;
He must do miracles makes me forsake it. [*Exeunt severally.*

CIT. *Fie upon 'em, little infidels! what a matter's here now! Well, I'll be hanged for a halfpenny, if there be not some abomination knavery in this play. Well; let 'em look to't; Ralph must come, and, if there be any tricks a-brewing—*

WIFE. *Let 'em brew and bake too, husband, a' God's name; Ralph will find all out, I warrant you, an they were older than they are.*—[Enter BOY.]—*I pray, my pretty youth, is Ralph ready?*

BOY. *He will be presently.*

WIFE. *Now, I pray you, make my commendations unto him, and withal carry him this stick of liquorice: tell him his mistress sent it him; and bid him bite a piece; 'twill open his pipes the better, say.* [Exit BOY.

SCENE II

VENTUREWELL, *having given* JASPER *his dismissal, is now in another room with* HUMPHREY, *whom he favors as a suitor for* LUCE'S *hand.* HUMPHREY *always talks in rhyme, to stress the fact that he is a burlesque character.*

VENT. Come, sir, she's yours; upon my faith, she's yours;
You have my hand: for other idle lets[2]
Between your hopes and her, thus with a wind
They are scattered and no more. My wanton prentice,
That like a bladder blew himself with love,
I have let out, and sent him to discover
New masters yet unknown.
HUMP. I thank you, sir;
Indeed, I thank you, sir; and, ere I stir,
It shall be known, however you do deem,
I am of gentle blood, and gentle seem.
VENT. Oh, sir, I know it certain.
HUMP. Sir, my friend,
Although, as writers say, all things have end,
And that we call a pudding hath his two,
Oh, let it not seem strange, I pray, to you,
If in this bloody simile I put
My love, more endless than frail things or gut!

WIFE. *Husband, I prithee, sweet lamb, tell me one thing; but tell me truly.—Stay, youths, I beseech you, till I question my husband.*

CIT. *What is it, mouse?*

WIFE. *Sirrah, didst thou ever see a prettier child? how it behaves itself, I warrant ye, and speaks and looks and perts up the head!—I pray you, brother, with your favor, were you never none of Master Moncaster's*[3] *scholars?*

CIT. *Chicken, I prithee heartily, contain thyself: the childer are pretty childer; but when Ralph comes, lamb—*

WIFE. *Ay, when Ralph comes, cony!—Well, my youth, you may proceed.*

VENT. Well, sir, you know my love, and rest, I hope,
Assured of my consent; get but my daughter's,
And wed her when you please. You must be bold,

[2] hindrances.
[3] Richard Mulcaster was head master of Merchant Taylors' School from 1561 to 1586.

And clap in close unto her: come, I know
You have language good enough to win a wench.

WIFE. *A whoreson tyrant! h'as been an old stringer*[4] *in's days, I warrant him.*

HUMP. I take your gentle offer, and withal
Yield love again for love reciprocal.

VENT., *calling*. What, Luce! within there!

Enter LUCE.

LUCE. Called you, sir?

VENT. I did.
Give entertainment to this gentleman;
And see you be not froward.—To her, sir:
My presence will but be an eye-sore to you. [*Exit*.

HUMP. Fair Mistress Luce, how do you?[5] are you well?
Give me your hand, and then I pray you tell
How doth your little sister and your brother,
And whether you love me or any other.

LUCE. Sir, these are quickly answered.

HUMP. So they are,
Where women are not cruel. But how far
Is it now distant from the place we are in,
Unto that blessèd place, your father's warren?

LUCE. What makes you think of that, sir?

HUMP. Even that face.
For, stealing rabbits whilom in that place,
God Cupid, or the keeper, I know not whether,
Unto my cost and charges brought you thither,
And there began—

LUCE. Your game, sir.

HUMP. Let no game,
Or any thing that tendeth to the same,
Be ever more remembered, thou fair killer,
For whom I sate me down, and brake my tiller.[6]

WIFE. *There's a kind gentleman, I warrant you: when will you do as much for me, George?*

LUCE. Beshrew me, sir, I am sorry for your losses,
But, as the proverb says, I cannot cry.
I would you had not seen me!

HUMP. So would I,
Unless you had more maw to do me good.

LUCE. Why, cannot this strange passion be withstood?
Send for a constable, and raise the town.

HUMP. Oh, no! my valiant love will batter down
Millions of constables, and put to flight
Even that great watch of Midsummer-day at night.

LUCE. Beshrew me, sir, 'twere good I yielded, then;
Weak women cannot hope, where valiant men
Have no resistance.

HUMP. Yield, then; I am full
Of pity, though I say it, and can pull
Out of my pocket thus a pair of gloves.
Look, Lucy, look; the dog's tooth nor the dove's
Are not so white as these; and sweet they be,
And whipped about with silk, as you may see.
If you desire the price, shoot from your eye
A beam to this place, and you shall espy
F S, which is to say, my sweetest honey,
They cost me three and twopence, or no money.

LUCE. Well, sir, I take them kindly, and I thank you:
What would you more?

HUMP. Nothing.

LUCE. Why, then, farewell.

HUMP. Nor so, nor so; for, lady, I must tell,
Before we part, for what we met together:
God grant me time and patience and fair weather!

LUCE. Speak, and declare your mind in terms so brief.

[4] wencher.
[5] Q, "How do you do?"
[6] bow.

HUMP. I shall: then, first and foremost, for relief
I call to you, if that you can afford it;
I care not at what price, for, on my word, it
Shall be repaid again, although it cost me
More than I'll speak of now; for love hath tossed me [160
In furious blanket like a tennis-ball,
And now I rise aloft, and now I fall.
LUCE. Alas, good gentleman, alas the day!
HUMP. I thank you heartily; and, as I say,
Thus do I still continue without rest,
I' th' morning like a man, at night a beast, [169
Roaring and bellowing mine own disquiet,
That much I fear, forsaking of my diet
Will bring me presently to that quandáry,
I shall bid all adieu.
LUCE. Now, by St. Mary,
That were great pity!
HUMP. So it were, beshrew me;
Then, ease me, lusty Luce, and pity show me.
LUCE. Why, sir, you know my will is nothing worth [180
Without my father's grant; get his consent,
And then you may with [full] assurance try me.
HUMP. The worshipful your sire will not deny me;
For I have asked him, and he hath replied,
"Sweet Master Humphrey, Luce shall be thy bride." [190
LUCE. Sweet Master Humphrey, then I am content.
HUMP. And so am I, in truth.
LUCE. Yet take me with you;[7]
There is another clause must be annexed,
And this it is: I swore, and will perform it,
No man shall ever joy me as his wife
But he that stole me hence. If you dare venture, [200
I am yours (you need not fear; my father loves you);
If not, farewell for ever!
HUMP. Stay, nymph, stay:
I have a double gelding, colored bay,
Sprung by his father from Barbarian kind;
Another for myself, though somewhat blind,
Yet true as trusty tree. [210
LUCE. I am satisfied;
And so I give my hand. Our course must lie
Through Waltham Forest, where I have a friend
Will entertain us. So, farewell, Sir Humphrey,
And think upon your business. [*Exit.*
HUMP. Though I die, [219
I am resolved to venture life and limb
For one so young, so fair, so kind, so trim.

WIFE. *By my faith and troth, George, and as I am virtuous, it is e'en the kindest young man that ever trod on shoe-leather.—Well, go thy ways; if thou hast her not, 'tis not thy fault, 'faith.*

CIT. *I prithee, mouse, be patient; 'a shall have her, or I'll make some of 'em smoke for't.* [230

WIFE. *That's my good lamb, George.—Fie, this stinking tobacco kills me![8] would there were none in England!—Now, I pray, gentlemen, what good does this stinking tobacco do you? nothing, I warrant you: make chimneys o' your faces!*

SCENE III

The play proper is now interrupted to introduce RALPH *as a grocer in his shop. He has been granted two boys to act as his assistants. He is more of a romantic than a tradesman, and is feeding his romantic fancy by reading "Palmerin of England."*

WIFE. *Oh, husband, husband, now, now! there's Ralph, there's Ralph.*

CIT. *Peace, fool! let Ralph alone.—* [10
Hark you, Ralph; do not strain yourself too much at the first.—Peace!—Begin, Ralph.

RAL. "Then Palmerin and Trineus,

[7] understand me.

[8] Qq. men.

snatching their lances from their dwarfs, and clasping their helmets, galloped amain after the giant; and Palmerin, having gotten a sight of him, came posting amain, saying, 'Stay, traitorous thief! for thou [19 mayst not so carry away her that is worth the greatest lord in the world;' and, with these words, gave him a blow on the shoulder, that he struck him besides his elephant. And Trineus, coming to the knight that had Agricola behind him, set him soon besides his horse, with his neck broken in the fall; so that the princess, getting out of the throng, between joy and grief, said, 'All happy knight, the mirror of all such as follow arms, now [30 may I be well assured of the love thou bearest me.' "—I wonder why the kings do not raise an army of fourteen or fifteen hundred thousand men, as big as the army that the Prince of Portigo brought against Rosicleer, and destroy these giants; they do much hurt to wand'ring damsels that go in quest of their knights.

WIFE. *Faith, husband, and Ralph says true; for they say the King of Portugal* [40 *cannot sit at his meat but the giants and the ettins*[9] *will come and snatch it from him.*

CIT. *Hold thy tongue.—On, Ralph!*

RAL. And certainly those knights are much to be commended, who, neglecting their possessions, wander with a squire and a dwarf through the deserts to relieve poor ladies.

WIFE. *Ay, by* [*my*] *faith, are they,* [50 *Ralph; let 'em say what they will, they are indeed. Our knights neglect their possessions well enough, but they do not the rest.*

RAL. There are no such courteous and fair well-spoken knights in this age: they will call one "the son of a whore" that Palmerin of England would have called "fair sir"; and one that Rosicleer would have called "right beauteous damsel" [60 they will call "damned bitch".

WIFE. *I'll be sworn will they, Ralph; they have called me so an hundred times about a scurvy pipe of tobacco.*

[9] cannibal giants.

RAL. But what brave spirit could be content to sit in his shop, with a flappet of wood and a blue apron before him, selling mithridatum and dragon's-water to visited houses,[10] that might pursue feats of arms, and, through his noble [70 achievements, procure such a famous history to be written of his heroic prowess?

CIT. *Well said, Ralph; some more of those words, Ralph!*

WIFE. *They go finely, by my troth.*

RAL. Why should not I, then, pursue this course, both for the credit of myself and our company? for, amongst all the worthy books of achievements, I do not call to mind that I yet read of a grocer-errant: I will be the said knight.—Have you heard of any that hath wandered [82 unfurnished of his squire and dwarf? My elder prentice Tim shall be my trusty squire, and little George my dwarf. Hence, my blue apron! Yet, in remembrance of my former trade, upon my shield shall be portrayed a Burning Pestle, and I will be called "the Knight of the Burning Pestle."

WIFE. *Nay, I dare swear thou wilt not forget thy old trade; thou wert ever* [90 *meek.*

RAL. Tim!

TIM. Anon.

RAL. My belovëd squire, and George my dwarf, I charge you that from henceforth you never call me by any other name but "the right courteous and valiant Knight of the Burning Pestle," and that you never call any female by the name of a woman or wench, but "fair lady," if [100 she have her desires; if not, "distressed damsel;" that you call all forests and heaths "deserts," and all horses "palfreys."

WIFE. *This is very fine, faith.—Do the gentlemen like Ralph, think you, husband?*

CIT. *Ay, I warrant thee; the players would give all the shoes in their shop for him.* [100

RAL. My beloved squire Tim, stand out. Admit this were a desert, and over

[10] houses visited by the plague.

it a knight-errant pricking,[11] and I should bid you inquire of his intents, what would you say?

Tim. "Sir, my master sent me to know whither you are riding?"

Ral. No, thus: "Fair sir, the right courteous and valiant Knight of the Burning Pestle commanded me to inquire upon what adventure you are bound, [121 whether to relieve some distressed damsel, or otherwise."

Cit. *Whoreson blockhead, cannot remember!*

Wife. *I' faith, and Ralph told him on't before: all the gentlemen heard him.—Did he not, gentlemen? did not Ralph tell him on't?*

Geo. Right courteous and valiant Knight of the Burning Pestle, here is a [130 distressed damsel to have a halfpennyworth of pepper.

Wife. *That's a good boy! see, the little boy can hit it; by my troth, it's a fine child.*

Ral. Relieve her, with all courteous language. Now shut up shop; no more my prentice[s] but my trusty squire and dwarf. I must bespeak my shield and arming pestle. [*Exeunt* Tim *and* George.

Cit. *Go thy ways, Ralph! As I'm a* [141 *true man, thou art the best on 'em all.*

Wife. *Ralph, Ralph!*

Ral. *What say you, mistress?*

Wife. *I prithee, come again quickly, sweet Ralph.*

Ral. *By and by.* [Exit.

Scene IV

Jasper, *having been turned off by his master, has gone home, to get his father and mother's blessing; but his father is out, and all his mother's affection goes to her younger son. She is accordingly rejecting* Jasper's *suit, believing that his stay at home will lessen the store she has laid up for the other. Her husband she is heartily sick of, because he is not merely improvident, but adds to the offence* [10 *by being always cheerful.*

Mistr. Mer. Give thee my blessing! no, I'll ne'er give thee my blessing; I'll see thee hanged first; it shall ne'er be said I gave thee my blessing. Th'art thy father's own son, of the right blood of the Merrythoughts. I may curse the time that e'er I knew thy father; he hath spent all his own and mine too; and, when I tell him of it, he laughs, and [20 dances, and sings, and cries, "A merry heart lives long-a". And thou art a wastethrift, and art run away from thy master that loved thee well, and art come to me; and I have laid up a little for my younger son Michael, and thou think'st to bezzle that, but thou shalt never be able to do it.—Come hither, Michael!

Enter Michael.

Come, Michael, down on thy knees; thou shalt have my blessing. [31

Mic., *kneeling*. I pray you, mother, pray to God to bless me.

Mistr. Mer. God bless thee! But Jasper shall never have my blessing; he shall be hanged first: shall he not, Michael? how sayst thou?

Mic. Yes, forsooth, mother, and grace of God.

Mistr. Mer. That's a good boy! [40

Wife. *I' faith, it's a fine-spoken child.*

Jas. Mother, though you forget a parent's love,
I must preserve the duty of a child.
I ran not from my master, nor return
To have your stock maintain my idleness.

Wife. *Ungracious child, I warrant him; hark how he chops logic with his mother! —Thou hadst best tell her she lies; do, tell her she lies.* [50

Cit. *If he were my son, I would hang him up by the heels, and flay him, and salt him, whoreson halter-sack!*

Jas. My coming only is to beg your love,
Which I must ever, though I never gain it;
And, howsoever you esteem of me,
There is no drop of blood hid in these veins [60
But, I remember well, belongs to you

[11] spurring.

That brought me forth, and would be glad for you
To rip them all again and let it out.

MISTR. MER. I' faith, I had sorrow enough for thee, God knows; but I'll hamper thee well enough. Get thee in, thou vagabond, get thee in, and learn of thy brother Michael. [*Exeunt* JASPER *and* MICHAEL. [70

MER., *singing within.*

Nose, nose, jolly red nose,
And who gave thee this jolly red nose?

MISTR. MER. Hark, my husband! he's singing and hoiting[12]; and I'm fain to cark and care, and all little enough.—[*Calling.*] Husband! Charles! Charles Merrythought!

Enter MERRYTHOUGHT.

MER., *singing.* [80

Nutmegs and ginger, cinnamon and cloves;
And they gave me this jolly red nose.

MISTR. MER. If you would consider your state, you would have little list to sing, i-wis.

MER. It should never be considered, while it were an estate, if I thought it would spoil my singing.

MISTR. MER. But how wilt thou do, [89 Charles? thou art an old man, and thou canst not work, and thou hast not forty shillings left, and thou eatest good meat and drinkest good drink and laughest.

MER. And will do.

MISTR. MER. But how wilt thou come by it, Charles?

MER. How! why, how have I done hitherto this forty years? I never came into my dining room, but, at eleven and six o'clock, I found excellent meat and [100 drink a' th' table; my clothes were never worn out but next morning a tailor brought me a new suit: and without question it will be so ever; use makes perfectness. If all should fail, it is but a little straining myself extraordinary, and laugh myself to death.

WIFE. *It's a foolish old man this; is not he, George?*

CIT. *Yes, cony.* [110

[12] rioting.

WIFE. *Give me a' penny i' th' purse while I live, George.*

CIT. *Ay, by Lady, cony, hold thee there.*

MISTR. MER. Well, Charles; you promised to provide for Jasper; and I have laid up for Michael. I pray you, pay Jasper his portion: he's come home, and he shall not consume Michael's stock. He says his master turned him away, but, I promise you truly, I think he ran away. [121

WIFE. *No, indeed, Mistress Merrythought, though he be a notable gallows,*[13] *yet I'll assure you his master did turn him away, even in this place; 'twas, i' faith, within this half-hour, about his daughter; my husband was by.*

CIT. *Hang him, rogue! he served him well enough. Love his master's daughter! By my troth, cony, if there were* [130 *a thousand boys, thou wouldst spoil them all with taking their parts. Let his mother alone with him.*

WIFE. *Ay, George; but yet truth is truth.*

MER. Where is Jasper? he's welcome, however. Call him in; he shall have his portion. Is he merry?

MISTR. MER. Ah, foul chive him,[14] he is too merry!—[*Calling.*] Jasper! Michael!

Re-enter JASPER *and* MICHAEL. [141

MER. Welcome, Jasper! though thou runn'st away, welcome! God bless thee! 'Tis thy mother's mind thou shouldst receive thy portion; thou hast been abroad, and I hope hast learned experience enough to govern it; thou art of sufficient years; hold thy hand—one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, there's ten shillings for thee. [*Gives money.*] [150 Thrust thyself into the world with that, and take some settled course: if fortune cross thee, thou hast a retiring place; come home to me; I have twenty shillings left. Be a good husband: [15] that is, wear ordinary clothes, eat the best meat, and drink the best drink; be merry, and give to the poor, and, believe me, thou hast no end of thy goods.

[13] gallows-bird.
[14] bad luck to him.
[15] be provident.

JASPER. Long may you live free from all thought of ill, [161
And long have cause to be thus merry still!
But, father—

MER. No more words, Jasper; get thee gone. Thou hast my blessing; thy father's spirit upon thee! Farewell, Jasper! [*Singing.*]

But yet, or ere you part (oh, cruel!)
Kiss me, kiss me, sweeting, mine own dear jewel! [171

So, now begone; no words. [*Exit* JASPER.

MISTR. MER. So, Michael, now get thee gone too.

MIC. Yes, forsooth, mother; but I'll have my father's blessing first.

MISTR. MER. No, Michael; 'tis no matter for his blessing; thou hast my blessing; begone. I'll fetch my money and jewels, and follow thee; I'll stay no longer with him, I warrant thee. [*Exit* MI- [181
CHAEL.]—Truly, Charles, I'll be gone too.

MER. What! you will not?

MISTR. MER. Yes, indeed will I.

MER., *singing.*

Heigh-ho, farewell, Nan!
I'll never trust wench more again, if I can.

MISTR. MER. You shall not think, when all your own is gone, to spend that I have been scraping up for Michael. [190

MER. Farewell, good wife; I expect it not: all I have to do in this world, is to be merry; which I shall, if the ground be not taken from me; and, if it be, [*singing*]

When earth and seas from me are reft,
The skies aloft for me are left.

[*Exeunt severally.*

WIFE. *I'll be sworn he's a merry old gentleman for all that.* [Music.] *Hark, hark, husband, hark! fiddles, fiddles!* [200 *now surely they go finely. They say 'tis present death for these fiddlers to tune their rebecks*[16] *before the great Turk's grace; is't not, George?* [Enter a BOY and dances.] *But, look, look! here's a youth dances!—Now, good youth, do a turn a' th' toe.—Sweetheart, i' faith, I'll have Ralph come and do some of his gambols. He'll ride the wild mare,*[17] *gentlemen, 'twould do your hearts good to see* [210 *him.—I thank you, kind youth; pray, bid Ralph come.*

CIT. *Peace, cony!—Sirrah, you scurvy boy, bid the players send Ralph; or, by God's——an they do not, I'll tear some of their periwigs beside their heads. This is all riff-raff.* [Exit BOY.

ACT TWO

SCENE I

HUMPHREY, *being a ready victim of* LUCE'S *duplicity, proceeds to make her father another. The scene is a room in the merchant's house, and it is evening.*

VENT. And how, faith, how goes it now, son Humphrey?

HUMP. Right worshipful, and my belovëd friend
And father dear, this matter's at an end.

VENT. 'Tis well: it should be so: I'm [10 glad the girl
Is found so tractable.

HUMP. Nay, she must whirl
From hence (and you must wink; for so, I say,
The story tells) to-morrow before day.

WIFE. *George, dost thou think in thy conscience now 'twill be a match? tell me but what thou think'st, sweet rogue. Thou seest the poor gentleman, dear* [20 *heart, how it labors and throbs, I warrant you, to be at rest! I'll go move the father for't.*

CIT. *No, no; I prithee, sit still, honeysuckle; thou'lt spoil all. If he deny him, I'll bring half a dozen good fellows myself, and, in the shutting of an evening, knock 't up, and there's an end.*

WIFE. *I'll buss thee for that, i' faith, boy. Well, George, well, you have been* [30 *a wag in your days, I warrant you; but God forgive you! and I do, with all my heart.*

VENT. How was it, son? you told me that to-morrow,
Before daybreak, you must convey her hence.

[16] a sort of fiddle.

[17] play at see-saw.

HUMP. I must, I must; and thus it is agreed:
Your daughter rides upon a brown-bay steed,
I on a sorrel, which I bought of Brian,
The honest host of the Red Roaring Lion,
In Waltham situate. Then, if you may,
Consent in seemly sort; lest, by delay,
The Fatal Sisters come, and do the office,
And then you'll sing another song.
VENT. Alas!
Why should you be thus full of grief to me,
That do as willing as yourself agree
To any thing, so it be good and fair?
Then, steal her when you will, if such a pleasure
Content you both; I'll sleep and never see it,
To make your joys more full. But tell me why
You may not here perform your marriäge?

WIFE. *God's blessing a' thy soul, old man! i' faith, thou art loath to part true hearts. I see 'a has her, George; and I'm as glad on't!—Well, go thy ways, Humphrey; for a fair-spoken man I believe thou hast not thy fellow within the walls of London; an I should say the suburbs too, I should not lie.—Why dost not rejoice with me, George?*

CIT. *If I could but see Ralph again, I were as merry as mine host, i' faith.*

HUMP. The cause you seem to ask, I thus declare:
Help me, O Muses nine! Your daughter sware
A foolish oath, the more it was the pity;
Yet no one but myself within this city
Shall dare to say so, but a bold defiance
Shall meet him, were he of the noble science; [1]
And yet she sware, and yet why did she swear?
Truly, I cannot tell, unless it were
For her own ease; for, sure, sometimes an oath,
Being sworn thereafter, is like cordial broth;
And this it was she swore, never to marry
But such a one whose mighty arm could carry
(As meaning me, for I am such a one)
Her bodily away, through stick and stone,
Till both of us arrive, at her request,
Some ten miles off, in the wild Waltham Forést.
VENT. If this be all, you shall not need to fear
Any denial in your love: proceed;
I'll neither follow nor repent the deed.
HUMP. Good night, twenty good nights, and twenty more,
And twenty more good nights,—that makes three score! [*Exeunt severally.*

[1] a master of fencing.

SCENE II

MISTRESS MERRYTHOUGHT *and* MICHAEL, *leaving home, and wandering anywhither, have got as far as Waltham Forest. The lady is becoming tired, and night has fallen.*

MISTR. MER. Come, Michael; art thou not weary, boy?

MIC. No, forsooth, mother, not I.

MISTR. MER. Where be we now, child?

MIC. Indeed, forsooth, mother, I cannot tell, unless we be at Mile End. Is not all the world Mile End, mother?

MISTR. MER. No, Michael, not all the world, boy; but I can assure thee, Michael, Mile End is a goodly matter: there has been a pitch-field, my child, between the naughty Spaniels and the Englishmen; and the Spaniels ran away, Michael, and the Englishmen followed: my neighbor Coxstone was there, boy, and killed them all with a birding-piece.

MIC. Mother, forsooth—

MISTR. MER. What says my white boy?

MIC. Shall not my father go with us too?

MISTR. MER. No, Michael, let thy father go snick-up; [2] he shall never come between a pair of sheets with me again while he lives; let him stay at home, and sing for his supper, boy. Come, child, sit down, and I'll show my boy fine knacks,

[2] go hang.

indeed. [*They sit down. She produces a casket.*] Look here, Michael; here's a ring, and here's a brooch, and here's a bracelet, and here's two rings more, and here's money and gold by th' eye, my boy.

Mic. Shall I have all this, mother?

Mistr. Mer. Ay, Michael, thou shalt have all, Michael. [40

Cit. *How lik'st thou this, wench?*

Wife. *I cannot tell; I would have Ralph, George; I'll see no more else, indeed, la; and I pray you, let the youths understand so much by word of mouth; for, I tell you truly, I'm afraid a' my boy. Come, come, George, let's be merry and wise: the child's a fatherless child; and, say they should put him into a strait pair of gaskins, 'twere worse than knotgrass;*[3] *he would never grow after it.* [51

Enter Ralph, Tim, and George.

Cit. *Here's Ralph, here's Ralph!*

Wife. *How do you, Ralph? you are welcome, Ralph, as I may say; it's a good boy, hold up thy head, and be not afraid; we are thy friends, Ralph; the gentlemen will praise thee, Ralph, if thou playest thy part with audacity. Begin, Ralph, a' God's name!* [60

Ral. My trusty squire, unlace my helm; give me my hat.
Where are we, or what desert may this be?

Geo. Mirror of knighthood, this is, as I take it, the perilous Waltham Down, in whose bottom stands the enchanted valley.

Mistr. Mer. Oh, Michael, we are betrayed, we are betrayed! here be giants! Fly, boy! fly, boy! fly! [*Runs off with* [71 Michael, *leaving the casket.*

Ral. Lace on my helm again. What noise is this?
A gentle lady, flying the embrace
Of some uncourteous knight! I will relieve her.
Go, squire, and say, the Knight that wears this Pestle
In honor of all ladies swears revenge [80
Upon that recreant coward that pursues her;
Go, comfort her, and that same gentle squire
That bears her company.

Tim. I go, brave knight. [*Exit.*

Ral. My trusty dwarf and friend, reach me my shield;
And hold it while I swear. First, by my knighthood; [90
Then by the soul of Amadis de Gaul,
My famous ancestor; then by my sword
The beauteous Brionella girt about me;
By this bright burning Pestle, of mine honor
The living trophy; and by all respect
Due to distressëd damsels; here I vow
Never to end the quest of this fair lady
And that forsaken squire till by my valor [100
I gain their liberty!

Geo. Heaven bless the knight
That thus relieves poor errant gentlewomen! [*Exeunt.*

Wife. *Ay, marry, Ralph, this has some savor in't; I would see the proudest of them all offer to carry his books after him. But, George, I will not have him go away so soon; I shall be sick if he go away, that I shall: call Ralph again,* [110 *George, call Ralph again; I prithee, sweetheart, let him come fight before me, and let's ha' some drums and some trumpets, and let him kill all that comes near him, an thou lov'st me, George!*

Cit. *Peace a little, bird: he shall kill them all, an they were twenty more on 'em than there are.*

Enter Jasper.

Jas. Now, Fortune, if thou be'st not only ill, [120
Show me thy better face, and bring about
Thy desperate wheel, that I may climb at length,
And stand [secure]. This is our place of meeting,
If love have any constancy. Oh, age,
Where only wealthy men are counted happy!

[3] Supposed, if taken in an infusion, to be a preventive of animal growth.

How shall I please thee, how deserve thy smiles,
When I am only rich in misery?
My father's blessing and this little coin
Is my inheritance; a strong revénue!
From earth thou art, and to the earth I give thee: [*Throws away the money.*
There grow and multiply, whilst fresher air
Breeds me a fresher fortune. [*Spies the casket.*] How! illusion! [*Takes it up.*
What, hath the devil coined himself before me?
'Tis metal good, it rings well; I am waking,
And taking too, I hope. [*Opens it.*] Now, God's dear blessing
Upon his heart that left it here! 'tis mine;
These pearls, I take it, were not left for swine. [*Exit with the casket.*

WIFE. *I do not like that this unthrifty youth should embezzle away the money; the poor gentlewoman his mother will have a heavy heart for it, God knows.*

CIT. *And reason good, sweetheart.*

WIFE. *But let him go; I'll tell Ralph a tale in's ear shall fetch him again with a wanion, I warrant him, if he be above ground; and besides, George, here be a number of sufficient gentlemen can witness, and myself, and yourself, and the musicians, if we be called in question.*

SCENE III

RALPH *and* GEORGE *have followed* TIM, *and are now in another part of the forest, awaiting his return to them.*

WIFE. *But here comes Ralph, George; thou shalt hear him speak as he were an emperal.*

RAL. Comes not sir squire again?

GEO. Right courteous knight,
Your squire doth come, and with him comes the lady,
For and[4] the Squire of Damsels, as I take it.

Enter TIM, MISTRESS MERRYTHOUGHT, *and* MICHAEL.

RAL. Madam, if any service or devoir
Of a poor errant knight may right your wrongs,
Command it; I am pressed[5] to give you succor;
For to that holy end I bear my armor.

MISTR. MER. Alas, sir! I am a poor gentlewoman, and I have lost my money in this forest!

RAL. Desert, you would say, lady; and not lost
Whilst I have sword and lance. Dry up your tears,
Which ill befit the beauty of that face,
And tell the story, if I may request it,
Of your disastrous fortune.

MISTR. MER. Out, alas! I left a thousand pound, a thousand pound, e'en all the money I had laid up for this youth, upon the sight of your mastership, you looked so grim, and, as I may say it, saving your presence, more like a giant than a mortal man.

RAL. I am as you are, lady; so are they;
All mortal. But why weeps this gentle squire?

MISTR. MER. Has he not cause to weep, do you think, when he hath lost his inheritance?

RAL. Young hope of valor, weep not; I am here
That will confound thy foe, and pay it dear
Upon his coward head, that dares deny
Distressèd squires and ladies equity.
I have but one horse, [up]on which shall ride
This fair lady behind me; and before,
This courteous squire: fortune will give us more
Upon our next adventure. Fairly speed
Beside us, squire and dwarf, to do us need! [*Exeunt.*

CIT. *Did not I tell you, Nell, what your man would do? by the faith of my body, wench, for clean action and good delivery, they may all cast their caps at him.*[6]

[4] And also.

[5] ready.

[6] own themselves beaten by him.

WIFE. *And so they may, i' faith; for I dare speak it boldly, the twelve companies of London cannot match him, timber for timber. Well, George, an he be not inveigled by some of these paltry players, I ha' much marvel: but, George, we ha' done our parts, if the boy have any grace to be thankful.* [70

CIT. *Yes, I warrant thee, duckling.*

SCENE IV

HUMPHREY *and* LUCE *have also got as far as the forest, where* JASPER *is to free the lady from the unwelcome attentions of her unfavored lover.*

HUMP. Good Mistress Luce, however I in fault am
For your lame horse, you're welcome unto Waltham;
But which way now to go, or what to say, [10
I know not truly, till it be broad day.
LUCE. Oh, fear not, Master Humphrey; I am guide
For this place good enough.
HUMP. Then, up and ride;
Or, if it please you, walk for your repose;
Or sit, or, if you will, go pluck a rose; [7]
Either of which shall be indifferent
To your good friend and Humphrey, whose consent [20
Is so entangled ever to your will
As the poor harmless horse is to the mill.
LUCE. Faith, an you say the word, we'll e'en sit down
And take a nap.
HUMP. 'Tis better in the town,
Where we may nap together; for, believe me,
To sleep without a snatch would mickle grieve me. [30
LUCE. You're merry, Master Humphrey.
HUMP. So I am,
And have been ever merry from my dam.
LUCE. Your nurse had the less labor.
HUMP. Faith, it may be,
Unless it were by chance I did beray [8] me.

[7] make yourself comfortable.
[8] befoul.

Enter JASPER.

JAS. Luce! dear friend Luce! [40
LUCE. Here, Jasper.
JAS. You are mine.
HUMP. If it be so, my friend, you use me fine:
What do you think I am?
JAS. An arrant noddy.
HUMP. A word of obloquy! Now, by God's body,
I'll tell thy master; for I know thee well.
JAS. Nay, an you be so forward for to tell, [51
[*Beating him*] Take that, and that; and tell him, sir, I gave it;
And say, I paid you well.
HUMP. Oh, sir, I have it
And do confess the payment! Pray, be quiet.
JAS. Go, get you to your nightcap and the diet,
To cure your beaten bones. [60
LUCE. Alas, poor Humphrey;
Get thee some wholesome broth, with sage and comfrey;
A little oil of roses and a feather
To 'noint thy back withal.
HUMP. When I came hither,
Would I had gone to Paris with John Dory! [9]
LUCE. Farewell, my pretty Nump [10]; I am very sorry [70
I cannot bear thee company.
HUMP. Farewell:
The devil's dam was ne'er so banged in hell. [*Exeunt* LUCE *and* JASPER.

WIFE. *This young Jasper will prove me another thing, a' my conscience, an he may be suffered. George, dost not see, George, how 'a swaggers, and flies at the very heads a' folks, as he were a dragon? Well, if I do not do his lesson for wronging the poor gentleman, I am no true* [81 *woman. His friends that brought him up might have been better occupied, i-wis, than ha' taught him these fegaries: he's e'en in the high way to the gallows, God bless him!*

CIT. *You're too bitter, cony; the young man may do well enough for all this.*

[9] the mock hero of a popular ballad.
[10] popular abbreviation for "Humphrey."

WIFE. *Come hither, Master Humphrey; has he hurt you? now, beshrew his fingers for't! Here, sweetheart, here's some* [91
green ginger for thee. Now, beshrew my heart, but 'a has peppernel in's head, as big as a pullet's egg! Alas, sweet lamb, how thy temples beat! Take the peace on him, sweetheart; take the peace on him.

CIT. *No, no; you talk like a foolish woman: I'll ha' Ralph fight with him, and swinge him up well-favoredly.—Sirrah boy, come hither.* [Enter BOY.] *Let Ralph come in and fight with Jasper.* [102

WIFE. *Ay, and beat him well; he's an unhappy boy.*

BOY. *Sir, you must pardon us; the plot of our play lies contrary; and 'twill hazard the spoiling of our play.*

CIT. *Plot me no plots! I'll ha' Ralph come out; I'll make your house too hot for you else.* [110

BOY. *Why, sir, he shall; but, if any thing fall out of order, the gentlemen must pardon us.*

CIT. *Go your ways, goodman boy!* [Exit BOY.] *I'll hold him a penny, he shall have his bellyful of fighting now. Ho, here comes Ralph! no more!*

Enter RALPH, MISTRESS MERRYTHOUGHT, MICHAEL, TIM, *and* GEORGE.

RAL. What knight is that, squire? ask him if he keep [121
The passage, bound by love of lady fair,
Or else but prickant.[11]

HUMP. Sir, I am no knight,
But a poor gentleman, that this same night
Had stolen from me, on yonder green,[12]
My lovely wife, and suffered (to be seen
Yet extant on my shoulders) such a greeting, [130
That whilst I live I shall think of that meeting.

WIFE. *Ay, Ralph, he beat him unmercifully, Ralph. An thou sparest him, Ralph, I would thou wert hanged.*

CIT. *No more, wife, no more.*

RAL. Where is the caitiff wretch hath done this deed?—
Lady, your pardon; that I may proceed
Upon the quest of this injurious knight.—
And thou, fair squire, repute me not the worse, [142
In leaving the great venture of the purse
And the rich casket, till some better leisure.

HUMP. Here comes the broker hath purloined my treasure.

Enter JASPER *and* LUCE.

RAL. Go, [trusty] squire, and tell him I am here, [150
An errant knight-at-arms, to crave delivery
Of that fair lady to her own knight's arms.
If he deny, bid him take choice of ground,
And so defy him.

TIM. From the Knight that bears
The Golden Pestle, I defy thee, knight,
Unless thou make fair restitutiön [160
Of that bright lady.

JAS. Tell the knight that sent thee
He is an ass, and I will keep the wench,
And knock his head-piece.

RAL. Knight, thou art but dead,
If thou recall not thy uncourteous terms.

WIFE. *Break's pate, Ralph; break's pate, Ralph, soundly!*

JAS. Come, knight; I am ready for you. Now, your pestle [*snatches away his pestle*] [171
Shall try what temper, sir, your mortar's of.

[*And then* JASPER *proceeds to show that he, as well as* RALPH, *is acquainted with the old romances.*]

"With that he stood upright in his stirrups,
And gave the Knight of the calf-skin such a knock [*knocks* RALPH *down*] [181
That he forsook his horse, and down he fell;
And then he leaped upon him, and, plucking off
His helmet—"

11 riding aimlessly.
12 Something has probably dropped out of this line.

HUMP. Nay, an my noble knight be down so soon,
Though I can scarcely go, I needs must run. [*Exit.* [190

WIFE. *Run, Ralph, run, Ralph; run for thy life, boy; Jasper comes, Jasper comes.* [*Exit* RALPH, *running.*

JAS. Come, Luce, we must have other arms for you:
Humphrey and Golden Pestle, both adieu! [*Exeunt.*

WIFE. *Sure the devil (God bless us!) is in this springald! Why, George, didst ever see such a fire-drake? I am* [200 *afraid my boy's miscarried: if he be, though he were Master Merrythought's son a thousand times, if there be any law in England, I'll make some of them smart for't.*

CIT. *No, no; I have found out the matter, sweetheart; Jasper is enchanted; as sure as we are here, he is enchanted: he could no more have stood in Ralph's hands than I can* [*stand*] *in my lord* [210 *mayor's. I'll have a ring to discover all enchantments, and Ralph shall beat him yet: be no more vexed, for it shall be so.*

SCENE V

RALPH, *with his Squire and Dwarf, and* MISTRESS MERRYTHOUGHT *and* MICHAEL *have arrived at the edge of the forest, where is situated the Bell Inn.*

WIFE. *Oh, husband, here's Ralph again! —Stay, Ralph, let me speak with thee. How dost thou, Ralph? art thou not shrewdly hurt? the foul great lungies laid unmercifully on thee. There's some sugar-candy for thee. Proceed; thou shalt have another bout with him.* [11

CIT. *If Ralph had him at the fencing-school, if he did not make a puppy of him, and drive him up and down the school, he should ne'er come in my shop more.*

MISTR. MER. Truly, Master Knight of the Burning Pestle, I am weary.

MIC. Indeed, la, mother, and I am very hungry. [20

RAL. Take comfort, gentle dame, and you, fair squire;
For in this desert there must needs be placed
Many strong castles, held by courteous knights;
And till I bring you safe to one of those,
I swear by this my order ne'er to leave you. [29

WIFE. *Well said, Ralph!—George, Ralph was ever comfortable, was he not?*

CIT. *Yes, duck.*

WIFE. *I shall ne'er forget him. When he had lost our child (you know it was strayed almost alone to Puddle Wharf, and the criers were abroad for it, and there it had drowned itself but for a sculler), Ralph was the most comfortablest to me: "Peace, mistress," says he, "let it go; I'll get you another as* [40 *good." Did he not, George, did he not say so?*

CIT. *Yes, indeed did he, mouse.*

GEO. I would we had a mess of pottage and a pot of drink, squire, and were going to bed!

TIM. Why, we are at Waltham town's end, and that's the Bell Inn.

GEO. Take courage, valiant knight, damsel, and squire! [50
I have discovered, not a stone's-cast off,
An ancient castle, held by the old knight
Of the most holy order of the Bell,
Who gives to all knights-errant entertain.
There plenty is of food, and all prepared
By the white hands of his own lady dear.
He hath three squires that welcome all his guests:
The first, hight Chamberlino, who will see [61
Our beds prepared, and bring us snowy sheets,
Where never footman stretched his buttered hams;
The second, hight Tapstero, who will see
Our pots full fillëd, and no froth therein;
The third, a gentle squire, Ostlero hight,
Who will our palfreys slick with wisps of straw, [70
And in the manger put them oats enough,

And never grease their teeth with candle-snuff.[13]

WIFE. *That same dwarf's a pretty boy, but the squire's a groutnol.*[14]

RAL. Knock at the gates, my squire, with stately lance. [TIM *knocks at the door of the inn.*

Enter TAPSTER.

TAP. Who's there?—You're welcome, gentlemen: will you see a room? [81

GEO. Right courteous and valiant Knight of the Burning Pestle, this is the Squire Tapstero.

RAL. Fair Squire Tapstero, I, a wandering knight,
Hight of the Burning Pestle, in the quest
Of this fair lady's casket and wrought purse,
Losing myself in this vast wilderness, [90
Am to this castle well by fortune brought;
Where, hearing of the goodly entertain
Your knight of holy order of the Bell
Gives to all damsels and all errant knights,
I thought to knock, and now am bold to enter.

TAP. An't please you see a chamber, you are very welcome. [*They all go into the inn.* [101

WIFE. *George, I would have something done, and I cannot tell what it is.*

CIT. *What is it, Nell?*

WIFE. *Why, George, shall Ralph beat nobody again? prithee, sweetheart, let him.*

CIT. *So he shall, Nell; and, if I join with him, we'll knock them all.*

SCENE VI

HUMPHREY *has made his way back to the merchant's house, to tell his sad story. He is now with* VENTUREWELL.

WIFE. *Oh, George, here's Master Humphrey again now that lost Mistress Luce, and Mistress Luce's father. Master Humphrey will do somebody's errand,*[15] *I warrant him.*

HUMP. Father, it's true in arms I ne'er shall clasp her; [10
For she is stol'n away by your man Jasper.

WIFE. *I thought he would tell him.*

VENT. Unhappy that I am, to lose my child!
Now I begin to think on Jasper's words,
Who oft hath urged [to] me thy foolishness:
Why didst thou let her go? thou lov'st her not, [20
That wouldst bring home thy life, and not bring her.

HUMP. Father, forgive me. Shall I tell you true?
Look on my shoulders, they are black and blue:
Whilst to and fro fair Luce and I were winding,
He came and basted me with a hedge-binding. [30

VENT. Get men and horses straight: we will be there
Within this hour. You know the place again?

HUMP. I know the place where he my loins did swaddle;
I'll get six horses, and to each a saddle.

VENT. Mean time I will go talk with Jasper's father. [*Exeunt severally.*

WIFE. *George, what wilt thou lay* [40 *with me now, that Master Humphrey has not Mistress Luce yet? speak, George, what wilt thou lay with me?*

CIT. *No, Nell; I warrant thee, Jasper is at Puckeridge with her by this.*

WIFE. *Nay, George, you must consider Mistress Luce's feet are tender; and besides 'tis dark; and, I promise you truly, I do not see how he should get out of Waltham Forest with her yet.* [50

CIT. *Nay, cony, what wilt thou lay with me, that Ralph has her not yet?*

WIFE. *I will not lay against Ralph, honey, because I have not spoken with him.*

SCENE VII

MERRYTHOUGHT, *left alone in his house, is entirely happy.*

WIFE. *But look, George, peace! here*

[13] A common trick of the ostlers at the time to prevent the horses from eating the hay.—*Weber.* [14] fool.
[15] play the knight-errant on somebody's behalf.

comes the merry old gentleman again.

MER., *singing.*

When it was grown to dark midnight,
And all were fast asleep,
In came Margaret's grimly ghost,
And stood at William's feet.

I have money, and meat, and drink [10 beforehand, till to-morrow at noon; why should I be sad? methinks I have half a dozen jovial spirits within me! [*Singing.*]

I am three merry men, and three merry men!

To what end should any man be sad in this world? give me a man that when he goes to hanging cries,

"Troul the black bowl to me!" [20

and a woman that will sing a catch in her travail! I have seen a man come by my door with a serious face, in a black cloak, without a hat-band, carrying his head as if he looked for pins in the street; I have looked out of my window half a year after, and have spied that man's head upon London Bridge. 'Tis vile: never trust a tailor that does not sing at his work; his mind is of nothing but filching. [31

WIFE. *Mark this, George; 'tis worth noting; Godfrey my tailor, you know, never sings, and he had fourteen yards to make this gown: and I'll be sworn, Mistress Penistone the draper's wife had one made with twelve.*

MER., *singing.*

'Tis mirth that fills the veins with blood,
More than wine or sleep or food; [40
Let each man keep his heart at ease:
No man dies of that disease.
He that would his body keep
From diseases must not weep;
But whoever laughs and sings,
Never he his body brings
Into fevers, gouts, or rheums,
Or ling'ringly his lungs consumes,
Or meets with achës in the bone,
Or catarrhs or griping stone; [50
But contented lives for aye;
The more he laughs, the more he may.

WIFE. *Look, George; how sayst thou by this, George? is't not a fine old man? —Now, God's blessing a' thy sweet lips!—When wilt thou be so merry, George? faith, thou art the frowningest little thing, when thou art angry, in a country.*

CIT. *Peace, cony; thou shalt see him taken down too, I warrant thee.* [61

Enter VENTUREWELL.

Here's Luce's father come now.

MER., *singing.*

As you came from Walsingham,
From that holy land,
There met you not with my true love
By the way as you came?

VENT. Oh, Master Merrythought, my daughter's gone! [70
This mirth becomes you not; my daughter's gone!

MER., *singing.*

Why, an if she be, what care I?
Or let her come, or go, or tarry.

VENT. Mock not my misery; it is your son
(Whom I have made my own, when all forsook him)
Has stol'n my only joy, my child, away.

MER., *singing.* [81

He set her on a milk-white steed,
And himself upon a grey;
He never turned his face again,
But he bore her quite away.

VENT. Unworthy of the kindness I have shown
To thee and thine! too late I well perceive
Thou art consenting to my daughter's loss. [91

MER. Your daughter! what a stir's here wi' your daughter? Let her go, think no more on her, but sing loud. If both my sons were on the gallows, I would sing,

"Down, down, down they fall;
Down, and arise they never shall."

VENT. Oh, might I behold her once again,
And she once more embrace her aged sire!

MER. Fie, how scurvily this goes! "And she once more embrace her aged sire"? You'll make a dog on her, will ye? she cares much for her aged sire, I warrant you. [*Singing.*]

She cares not for her daddy, nor
She cares not for her mammy,
For she is, she is, she is, she is
My lord of Lowgave's lassy.

VENT. For this thy scorn I will pursue that son
Of thine to death.

MER. Do; and, when you ha' killed him, [*singing*]

Give him flowers enow, palmer, give him flowers enow;
Give him red, and white, and blue, green, and yellow.

VENT. I'll fetch my daughter—

MER. I'll hear no more a' your daughter; it spoils my mirth.

VENT. I say, I'll fetch my daughter.

MER., *singing.*

Was never man for lady's sake,
Down, down,
Tormented as I, poor Sir Guy,
De derry down,
For Lucy's sake, that lady bright,
Down, down,
As ever men beheld with eye,
De derry down.

VENT. I'll be revenged, by Heaven!
[*Exeunt severally.*

WIFE. *How dost thou like this, George?*

CIT. *Why, this is well, cony; but, if Ralph were hot once, thou shouldst see more.* [Music.

WIFE. *The fiddlers go again, husband.*

CIT. *Ay, Nell; but this is scurvy music. I gave the whoreson gallows money, and I think he has not got me the waits of Southwark: if I hear 'em not anon, I'll twinge him by the ears.—You musicians, play "Baloo"!*

WIFE. *No, good George, let's ha' "Lachrymae"!*

CIT. *Why, this is it, cony.*

WIFE. *It's all the better, George. Now, sweet lamb, what story is that painted upon the cloth? "The Confutation of St. Paul"?*

CIT. *No, lamb; that's "Ralph and Lucrece."*

WIFE. *Ralph and Lucrece! which Ralph? our Ralph?*

CIT. *No, mouse; that was a Tartarian.*[16]

WIFE. *A Tartarian! Well, I would the fiddlers had done, that we might see our Ralph again!*

ACT THREE

SCENE I

It is still night in the forest, and LUCE *and* JASPER *have lost their way.*

JAS. Come, my dear dear; though we have lost our way,
We have not lost ourselves. Are you not weary
With this night's wandering, broken from your rest,
And frighted with the terror that attends
The darkness of this wild unpeopled place?

LUCE. No, my best friend; I cannot either fear
Or entertain a weary thought, whilst you
(The end of all my full desires) stand by me:
Let them that lose their hopes, and live to languish
Amongst the number of forsaken lovers,
Tell the long weary steps, and number time,
Start at a shadow, and shrink up their blood,
Whilst I (possessed with all content and quiet)
Thus take my pretty love, and thus embrace him.

JAS. You have caught me, Luce, so fast, that, whilst I live,
I shall become your faithful prisoner,
And wear these chains for ever. Come, sit down,

[16] a thief.

And rest your body, too, too delicate
For these disturbances.—[*They sit down.*] So: will you sleep?
Come, do not be more able than you are;
I know you are not skilful in these watches,
For women are no soldiers: be not nice,
But take it; sleep, I say.
LUCE. I cannot sleep;
Indeed, I cannot, friend.
JAS. Why, then, we'll sing,
And try how that will work upon our senses.
LUCE. I'll sing, or say, or any thing but sleep.
JAS. Come, little mermaid, rob me of my heart
With that enchanting voice.
LUCE. You mock me, Jasper.
[*They sing.*

JAS.

Tell me, dearest, what is love?

LUCE.

'Tis a lightning from above;
'Tis an arrow, 'tis a fire,
'Tis a boy they call Desire;
'Tis a smile
Doth beguile

JAS.

The poor hearts of men that prove.

Tell me more, are women true?

LUCE.

Some love change, and so do you.

JAS.

Are they fair and never kind?

LUCE.

Yes, when men turn with the wind.

JAS.

Are they froward?

LUCE.

Ever toward
Those that love, to love anew.

JAS. Dissemble it no more; I see the god
Of heavy sleep lay on his heavy mace
Upon your eyelids.
LUCE. I am very heavy. [*Sleeps.*
JAS. Sleep, sleep; and quiet rest crown thy sweet thoughts!
Keep from her faïr blood distempers, startings,
Horrors, and fearful shapes! let all her dreams
Be joys and chaste delights, embraces, wishes,
And such new pleasures as the ravished soul
Gives to the senses!—So; my charms have took.—
Keep her, you powers divine, whilst I contemplate
Upon the wealth and beauty of her mind!
She is only fair and constant, only kind,
And only to thee, Jasper. Oh, my joys!
Whither will you transport me? let not fullness
Of my poor buried hopes come up together
And overcharge my spirits! I am weak.
Some say (however ill) the sea and women
Are governed by the moon; both ebb and flow,
Both full of changes; yet to them that know,
And truly judge, these but opinions are,
And heresies, to bring on pleasing war
Between our tempers, that without these were
Both void of after-love and present fear;
Which are the best of Cupid. Oh, thou child
Bred from despair, I dare not entertain thee,
Having a love without the faults of women,
And greater in her perfect goods than men!
Which to make good, and please myself the stronger,
Though certainly I am certain of her love,
I'll try her, that the world and memory
May sing to after-times her constancy.—
[*Draws his sword.*
Luce! Luce! awake!

LUCE. Why do you fright me, friend,
With those distempered looks? what makes your sword [132
Drawn in your hand? who hath offended you?
I prithee, Jasper, sleep; thou art wild with watching.
JAS. Come, make your way to Heaven, and bid the world,
With all the villanies that stick upon it,
Farewell; you're for another life. [140
LUCE. Oh, Jasper,
How have my tender years committed evil,
Especially against the man I love,
Thus to be cropped untimely?
JAS. Foolish girl,
Canst thou imagine I could love his daughter
That flung me from my fortune into nothing? [150
Dischargëd me his service, shut the doors
Upon my poverty, and scorned my prayers,
Sending me, like a boat without a mast,
To sink or swim? Come; by this hand you die;
I must have life and blood, to satisfy
Your father's wrongs.

WIFE. *Away, George, away! raise the watch at Ludgate, and bring a mitti-* [160 *mus from the justice for this desperate villain!—Now, I charge you, gentlemen, see the king's peace kept!—Oh, my heart, what a varlet's this, to offer manslaughter upon the harmless gentlewoman!*

CIT. *I warrant thee, sweetheart, we'll have him hampered.*

LUCE. Oh, Jasper, be not cruel!
If thou wilt kill me, smile, and do it quickly, [171
And let not many deaths appear before me.
I am a woman, made of fear and love,
A weak, weak woman; kill not with thy eyes,
They shoot me through and through: strike, I am ready;
And, dying, still I love thee.

Enter VENTUREWELL, HUMPHREY, *and Attendants* [181

VENT. Whereabouts?
JAS. <No more of this; now to myself again.>
HUMP. There, there he stands, with sword, like martial knight,
Drawn in his hand; therefore beware the fight,
You that be wise; for, were I good Sir Bevis, [190
I would not stay his coming, by your leavës.
VENT. Sirrah, restore my daughter!
JAS. Sirrah, no.
VENT. Upon him, then! [*They attack* JASPER, *and force* LUCE *from him.*

WIFE. *So; down with him, down with him, down with him! cut him i' the leg, boys, cut him i' the leg!* [199

VENT. Come your ways, minion: I'll provide a cage
For you, you're grown so tame.—Horse her away.
HUMP. Truly, I'm glad your forces have the day. [*Exeunt all except* JASPER.
JAS. They are gone, and I am hurt; my love is lost,
Never to get again. Oh, me unhappy!
Bleed, bleed and die! I cannot. Oh, my folly, [210
Thou hast betrayed me! Hope, where art thou fled?
Tell me, if thou be'st anywhere remaining,
Shall I but see my love again? Oh, no!
She will not deign to look upon her butcher;
Nor is it fit she should; yet I must venture.
Oh, Chance, or Fortune, or whate'er thou art, [221
That men adore for powerful, hear my cry,
And let me loving live or losing die!
[*Exit.*

WIFE. *Is 'a gone, George?*
CIT. *Ay, cony.*
WIFE. *Marry, and let him go, sweetheart. By the faith o' my body, a' has put me into such a fright, that I tremble* [230

(as they say) as 'twere an aspen-leaf. Look o' my little finger, George, how it shakes. Now, in truth, every member of my body is the worse for't.

CIT. *Come, hug in mine arms, sweet mouse; he shall not fright thee any more. Alas, mine own dear heart, how it quivers!*

SCENE II

Having spent the night in the Bell Inn at Waltham, RALPH, TIM, GEORGE, MISTRESS MERRYTHOUGHT, *and* MICHAEL *are preparing to depart, but the* HOST *of the Inn and his* TAPSTER *are unwilling to allow them to depart without payment of the reckoning.*

WIFE. *Oh, Ralph! how dost thou, Ralph? How hast thou slept to-night? has the knight used thee well?* [10

CIT. *Peace, Nell; let Ralph alone.*

TAP. Master, the reckoning is not paid.

RAL. Right courteous Knight, who, for the order's sake
Which thou hast ta'en, hang'st out the holy Bell,
As I this flaming Pestle bear about,
We render thanks to your puissant self,
Your beauteous lady, and your gentle squires, [20
For thus refreshing of our wearied limbs,
Stiffened with hard achievements in wild desert.

TAP. Sir, there is twelve shillings to pay.

RAL. Thou merry Squire Tapstero, thanks to thee
For comforting our souls with double jug:
And, if adventurous fortune prick thee forth, [31
Thou jovial squire, to follow feats of arms,
Take heed thou tender every lady's cause,
Every true knight, and every damsel fair;
But spill the blood of treacherous Saracens,
And false enchanters that with magic spells [41
Have done to death full many a noble knight.

HOST. Thou valiant Knight of the Burning Pestle, give ear to me; there is twelve shillings to pay, and, as I am a true knight, I will not bate a penny.

WIFE. *George, I prithee, tell me, must Ralph pay twelve shillings now?*

CIT. *No, Nell, no; nothing but the old knight is merry with Ralph.* [51

WIFE. *Oh, is't nothing else? Ralph will be as merry as he.*

RAL. Sir Knight, this mirth of yours becomes you well;
But, to requite this liberal courtesy,
If any of your squires will follow arms,
He shall receive from my heroic hand
A knighthood, by the virtue of this Pestle. [60

HOST. Fair Knight, I thank you for your noble offer:
[But here's the reckoning,] therefore, gentle Knight,
Twelve shillings you must pay, or I must cap [3] you.

WIFE. *Look, George! did not I tell thee as much? the Knight of the Bell is in earnest. Ralph shall not be beholding to him: give him his money, George, and let him go snick-up.* [71

CIT. *Cap Ralph! no!—Hold your hand, Sir Knight of the Bell; there's your money* [gives money]: *have you anything to say to Ralph now? Cap Ralph!*

WIFE. *I would you should know it, Ralph has friends that will not suffer him to be capped for ten times so much, and ten times to the end of that.—Now take thy course, Ralph.* [81

MISTR. MER. Come, Michael; thou and I will go home to thy father; he hath enough left to keep us a day or two, and we'll set fellows abroad to cry our purse and our casket: shall we, Michael?

MIC. Ay, I pray, mother; in truth, my feet are full of chilblains with travelling.

WIFE. *Faith, and those chilblains are a foul trouble. Mistress Merrythought,* [91

[3] arrest.

when your youth comes home, let him rub all the soles of his feet, and his heels, and his ankles, with a mouse-skin; or, if none of your people can catch a mouse, when he goes to bed, let him roll his feet in the warm embers, and, I warrant you, he shall be well; and you may make him put his fingers between his toes, and smell to them; it's very sovereign for his head, if he be costive. [101

MISTR. MER. Master Knight of the Burning Pestle, my son Michael and I bid you farewell: I thank your worship heartily for your kindness.

RAL. Farewell, fair lady, and your tender squire.
If, pricking through these deserts, I do hear
Of any traitorous knight, who through his guile [111
Hath light upon your casket and your purse,
I will despoil him of them, and restore them.

MISTR. MER. I thank your worship. [*Exit with* MICHAEL.

RAL. Dwarf, bear my shield; squire, elevate my lance.—
And now farewell, you Knight of holy Bell. [121

CIT. *Ay, ay, Ralph, all is paid.*

RAL. But yet, before I go, speak, worthy knight,
If aught you do of sad adventures know,
Where errant knight may through his prowess win
Eternal fame, and free some gentle souls
From endless bonds of steel and lingering pain. [130

HOST. <Sirrah, go to Nick the barber, and bid him prepare himself, as I told you before, quickly.

TAP. I am gone, sir.> [*Exit.*

HOST. Sir Knight, this wilderness affordeth none
But the great venture, where full many a knight
Hath tried his prowess, and come off with shame; [140
And where I would not have you lose your life
Against no man, but furious fiend of hell.

RAL. Speak on, Sir Knight; tell what he is and where:
For here I vow, upon my blazing badge,
Never to laze[4] a day in quietness,
But bread and water will I only eat,
And the green herb and rock shall be my couch, [150
Till I have quelled[5] that man, or beast, or fiend,
That works such damage to all errant knights.

HOST. Not far from hence, near to a craggy cliff,
At the north end of this distressëd town,
There doth stand a lowly house,[6]
Ruggedly builded, and in it a cave
In which an ugly giant now doth won,[7]
Yclepëd Barbaroso: in his hand [161
He shakes a naked lance of purest steel,
With sleeves turned up: and him before he wears
A motley garment, to preserve his clothes
From blood of those knights which he massacres
And ladies gent:[8] without his door doth hang
A copper basin on a prickant spear; [170
At which no sooner gentle knights can knock,
But the shrill sound fierce Barbaroso hears,
And, rushing forth, brings in the errant knight,
And sets him down in an enchanted chair;
Then, with an engine which he hath prepared, [180
With forty teeth, he claws his courtly crown;
Next makes him wink, and underneath his chin
He plants a brazen piece of mighty bord,[9]
And knocks his bullets[10] round about his cheeks;
Whilst with his fingers, and an instrument

[4] B, blaze. [5] killed.
[6] This line is probably imperfect.
[7] dwell. [8] noble.
[9] size. [10] balls of soap.

With which he snaps his hair off, he doth fill [191
The wretch's ears with a most hideous noise:
Thus every knight-adventurer he doth trim;
And now no creature dares encounter him.

RAL. In God's name, I will fight with him. Kind sir,
Go but before me to this dismal cave, [200
Where this huge giant Barbaroso dwells,
And, by that virtue that brave Rosicleer
That damnëd brood of ugly giants slew,
And Palmerin Frannarco overthrew,
I doubt not but to curb this traitor foul,
And to the devil send his guilty soul.

HOST. Brave-sprighted Knight, thus far I will perform
This your request; I'll bring you within sight [211
Of this most loathsome place, inhabited
By a more loathsome man, but dare not stay,
For his main force swoops all he sees away.

RAL. Saint George, set on before! march, squire and page! [*Exeunt.*

WIFE. *George, dost think Ralph will confound the giant?* [220

CIT. *I hold my cap to a farthing he does: why, Nell, I saw him wrastle with the great Dutchman, and hurl him.*

WIFE. *Faith, and that Dutchman was a goodly man, if all things were answerable to his bigness. And yet they say there was a Scotchman higher than he, and that they two and a knight met, and saw one another for nothing. But of all the sights that ever were in London,* [230 *since I was married, methinks the little child that was so fair grown about the members was the prettiest; that and the hermaphrodite.*

CIT. *Nay, by your leave, Nell, Ninivie*[11] *was better.*

WIFE. *Ninivie! oh, that was the story of Jone and the wall, was it not, George?*

CIT. *Yes, lamb.* [239

[11] the puppet show of Nineveh.

Enter MISTRESS MERRYTHOUGHT.

WIFE. *Look, George, here comes Mistress Merrythought again! and I would have Ralph come and fight with the giant; I tell you true, I long to see't.*

CIT. *Good Mistress Merrythought, begone, I pray you, for my sake; I pray you, forbear a little; you shall have audience presently; I have a little business.*

WIFE. *Mistress Merrythought, if it please you to refrain your passion a* [250 *little, till Ralph have dispatched the giant out of the way, we shall think ourselves much bound to you.* [Exit MISTRESS MERRYTHOUGHT.] *I thank you, good Mistress Merrythought.*

CIT. *Boy, come hither.* [Enter BOY.] *Send away Ralph and this whoreson giant quickly.*

BOY. *In good faith, sir, we cannot; you'll utterly spoil our play, and* [260 *make it to be hissed; and it cost money; you will not suffer us to go on with our plot.—I pray, gentlemen, rule him.*

CIT. *Let him come now and dispatch this, and I'll trouble you no more.*

BOY. *Will you give me your hand of that?*

WIFE. *Give him thy hand, George, do; and I'll kiss him. I warrant thee, the youth means plainly.* [270

BOY. *I'll send him to you presently.*

WIFE, kissing him. *I thank you, little youth.* [Exit BOY.] *Faith, the child hath a sweet breath, George; but I think it be troubled with the worms; carduus benedictus and mare's milk were the only thing in the world for't.*

SCENE III

The HOST *of the Inn has led* RALPH, *his Squire and his Dwarf to a barber's shop in Waltham. The exterior of the shop is adorned with the Elizabethan equivalent of a barber's pole, a copper basin and a string of teeth, to testify that the barber acted also as a dentist, as he always did in the days when barbers were surgeons.* [9

WIFE. *Oh, Ralph's here, George!—God send thee good luck, Ralph!*

Host. Puissant knight, yonder his mansion is.
Lo, where the spear and copper basin are!
Behold that string, on which hangs many a tooth,
Drawn from the gentle jaw of wandering knights!
I dare not stay to sound; he will appear. [*Exit.*
Ral. Oh, faint not, heart! Susan, my lady dear,
The cobbler's maid in Milk-street, for whose sake
I take these arms, oh, let the thought of thee
Carry thy knight through all adventurous deeds;
And, in the honor of thy beauteous self,
May I destroy this monster Barbaroso!—
Knock, squire, upon the basin, till it break
With the shrill strokes, or till the giant speak. [Tim *knocks upon the basin.*

Enter Barber, *from within.*

Wife. *Oh, George, the giant, the giant! —Now, Ralph, for thy life!*
Bar. What fond [12] unknowing wight is this, that dares
So rudely knock at Barbaroso's cell,
Where no man comes but leaves his fleece behind?
Ral. I, traitorous caitiff, who am sent by fate
To punish all the sad enormities
Thou hast committed against ladies gent
And errant knights. Traitor to God and men,
Prepare thyself; this is the dismal hour
Appointed for thee to give strict account
Of all thy beastly treacherous villainies.
Bar. Foolhardy knight, full soon thou shalt aby
This fond reproach: thy body will I bang; [*Takes down his pole.*
And, lo, upon that string thy teeth shall hang!
Prepare thyself, for dead soon shalt thou be. [*They fight.*
Ral. Saint George for me!
Bar. Gargantua for me!
Wife. *To him Ralph, to him! hold up the giant; set out thy leg before, Ralph!*
Cit. *Falsify a blow, Ralph, falsify a blow! the giant lies open on the left side.*
Wife. *Bear't off, bear't off still! there, boy!—Oh, Ralph's almost down, Ralph's almost down!*
Ral. Susan, inspire me! now have up again.
Wife. *Up, up, up, up, up! so, Ralph! down with him, down with him, Ralph!*
Cit. *Fetch him o'er the hip, boy!*
[Ralph *knocks down the* Barber.
Wife. *There, boy! kill, kill, kill, kill, kill, Ralph!*
Cit. *No, Ralph; get all out of him first.*
Ral. Presumptuous man, see to what desperate end
Thy treachery hath brought thee! The just gods,
Who never prosper those that do despise them,
For all the villainies which thou hast done
To knights and ladies, now have paid thee home
By my stiff arm, a knight adventurous.
But say, vile wretch, before I send thy soul
To sad Avernus (whither it must go),
What captives holdst thou in thy sable cave?
Bar. Go in, and free them all; thou hast the day.
Ral. Go, squire and dwarf, search in this dreadful cave,
And free the wretched prisoners from their bonds. [*Exeunt* Tim *and* George *into the shop.*
Bar. I crave for mercy, as thou art a knight,
And scorn'st to spill the blood of those that beg.
Ral. Thou show'dst no mercy, nor shalt thou have any;
Prepare thyself, for thou shalt surely die.

[12] foolish.

Re-enter TIM, *leading a* MAN *winking, with a basin under his chin.*

TIM. Behold, brave knight, here is one prisoner,
Whom this vild[13] man hath usëd as you see.
WIFE. *This is the first wise word I heard the squire speak.*
RAL. Speak what thou art, and how thou hast been used,
That I may give him cóndign punishment.
1 MAN. I am a knight that took my journey post
Northward from London; and in courteous wise
This giant trained me to his loathsome den,
Under pretence of killing of the itch,
And all my body with a powder strewed,
That smarts and stings—and cut away my beard,
And my curled locks wherein were ribands tied;
And with a water washed my tender eyes
(Whilst up and down about me still he skipped),
Whose virtue is, that, till my eyes be wiped
With a dry cloth, for this my foul disgrace,
I shall not dare to look a dog i' the face.
WIFE. *Alas, poor knight!—Relieve him, Ralph; relieve poor knights, whilst you live.*
RAL. My trusty squire, convey him to the town,
Where he may find relief.—Adieu, fair knight. [*Exit* MAN *with* TIM, *who presently re-enters.*

Re-enter GEORGE, *leading a* SECOND MAN, *with a patch over his nose.*

GEO. Puissant Knight, of the Burning Pestle hight,
See here another wretch, whom this foul beast
Hath scorched[14] and scored in this inhuman wise.
RAL. Speak me thy name, and eke thy place of birth,
And what hath been thy usage in this cave.
2 MAN. I am a knight, Sir Pockhole is my name,
And by my birth I am a Londoner,
Free by my copy, but my ancestors
Were Frenchmen all; and, riding hard this way
Upon a trotting horse, my bones did ache;
And I, faint knight, to ease my weary limbs,
Light at this cave; when straight this furious fiend,
With sharpest instruments of purest steel,
Did cut the gristle of my nose away,
And in the place this velvet plaster stands:
Relieve me, gentle knight, out of his hands!
WIFE. *Good Ralph, relieve Sir Pockhole, and send him away; for in truth his breath stinks.*
RAL. Convey him straight after the other knight.—
Sir Pockhole, fare you well.
2 MAN. Kind sir, good night!
[*Exit with* GEORGE, *who presently re-enters.*]
3 MAN, *within.* Deliver us!
WOM., *within.* Deliver us!
WIFE. *Hark, George, what a woeful cry there is! I think some woman lies-in there.*
3 MAN, *within.* Deliver us!
WOM., *within.* Deliver us!
RAL. What ghastly noise is this? Speak, Barbaroso,
Or, by this blazing steel, thy head goes off!
BAR. Prisoners of mine, whom I in diet keep.
Send lower down into the [inner] cave,
And in a tub that's heated smoking hot,
There may they find them, and deliver them.
RAL. Run, squire and dwarf; deliver them with speed. [TIM *and* GEORGE *go into the shop again.*

[13] B. wild.
[14] cut.

WIFE. *But will not Ralph kill this giant? Surely I am afeard, if he let him go, he will do as much hurt as ever he did.*

CIT. *Not so, mouse, neither, if he could convert him.*

WIFE. *Ay, George, if he could convert him; but a giant is not so soon converted as one of us ordinary people. There's a pretty tale of a witch, that had the devil's mark about her (God bless us!) that had a giant to her son, that was called Lob-lie-by-the-fire; didst never hear it, George?*

CIT. *Peace, Nell, here comes the prisoners.*

Re-enter TIM, *leading a* THIRD MAN, *with a glass of lotion in his hand, and* GEORGE *leading a* WOMAN, *with diet-bread and drink in her hand.*

GEO. Here be these pinëd wretches, manful knight,
That for this six weeks have not seen a wight.

RAL. Deliver what you are, and how you came
To this sad cave, and what your usage was.

3 MAN. I am an errant knight that followed arms
With spear and shield; and in my tender years
I stricken was with Cupid's fiery shaft,
And fell in love with this my lady dear,
And stole her from her friends in Turnbull-street,[15]
And bore her up and down from town to town,
Where we did eat and drink and music hear;
Till at the length at this unhappy town
We did arrive, and, coming to this cave,
This beast us caught, and put us in a tub,[16]
Where we this two months sweat, and should have done
Another month, if you had not relieved us.

WOM. This bread and water hath our diet been,
Together with a rib cut from a neck
Of burnëd mutton; hard hath been our fare:
Release us from this ugly giant's snare!

3 MAN. This hath been all the food we have received;
But only twice a-day, for novelty,
He gave a spoonful of this hearty broth
To each of us, through this same slender quill. [*Pulls out a syringe.*

RAL. From this infernal monster you shall go,
That useth knights and gentle ladies so!—
Convey them hence. [THIRD MAN *and* WOMAN *are led off by* TIM *and* GEORGE, *who presently re-enter.*

CIT. *Cony, I can tell thee, the gentlemen like Ralph.*

WIFE. *Ay, George, I see it well enough.—Gentlemen, I thank you all heartily for gracing my man Ralph; and, I promise you, you shall see him oftener.*

BAR. Mercy, great knight! I do recant my ill,
And henceforth never gentle blood will spill.

RAL. I give thee mercy; but yet shalt thou swear
Upon my Burning Pestle, to perform
Thy promise utterëd.

BAR. I swear and kiss. [*Kisses the pestle.*

RAL. Depart, then, and amend.—[*Exit* BARBER.
Come, squire and dwarf; the sun grows towards his set,
And we have many more adventures yet.
[*Exeunt.*

CIT. *Now Ralph is in this humor, I know he would ha' beaten all the boys in the house, if they had been set on him.*

WIFE. *Ay, George; but it is well as it is: I warrant you, the gentlemen do consider what it is to overthrow a giant.*

SCENE IV

MISTRESS MERRYTHOUGHT *has got back to her old home (or at least to the outside of it), with* MICHAEL, *and expects to be welcomed by her husband.*

WIFE. *But, look, George; here comes*

15 A street notorious for its brothels.
16 to cure venereal disease by sweating.

Mistress Merrythought, and her son Michael.—Now you are welcome, Mistress Merrythought; now Ralph has done, you may go on.

MISTR. MER. Mick, my boy— [10

MIC. Ay, forsooth, mother.

MISTR. MER. Be merry, Mick; we are at home now; where, I warrant you, you shall find the house flung out of the windows. [*Music within.*] Hark! hey, dogs, hey! this is the old world, i' faith, with my husband. If I get in among them, I'll play them such a lesson that they shall have little list to come scraping hither again— Why, Master Merry- [20 thought! husband! Charles Merrythought!

MER., *appearing at a window above, and singing.*

If you will sing, and dance, and laugh,
And hollow, and laugh again,
And then cry, "There, boys, there!" why, then,
One, two, three, and four,
We shall be merry within this hour. [30

MISTR. MER. Why, Charles, do you not know your own natural wife? I say, open the door, and turn me out those mangy companions; 'tis more than time that they were fellow and fellow-like with you. You are a gentleman, Charles, and an old man, and father of two children; and I myself (though I say it) by my mother's side niece to a worshipful gentleman and a conductor; he has been [40 three times in his majesty's service at Chester, and is now the fourth time, God bless him and his charge, upon his journey.

MER., *singing.*

Go from my window, love, go;
Go from my window, my dear!
The wind and the rain
Will drive you back again;
You cannot be lodgëd here. [50

Hark you, Mistress Merrythought, you that walk upon adventures, and forsake your husband, because he sings with never a penny in his purse; what, shall I think myself the worse? Faith, no, I'll be merry. You come not here; here's none but lads of mettle, lives of a hundred years and upwards; care never drunk their bloods, nor want made them warble "Heigh-ho, my heart is heavy". [60

MISTR. MER. Why, Master Merrythought, what am I, that you should laugh me to scorn thus abruptly? am I not your fellow-feeler, as we may say, in all our miseries? your comforter in health and sickness? have I not brought you children? are they not like you, Charles? look upon thine own image, hard-hearted man! and yet for all this—

MER., *singing.* [70

Begone, begone, my juggy, my puggy,
Begone, my love, my dear!
The weather is warm,
'Twill do thee no harm:
Thou canst not be lodgëd here.—

Be merry, boys! some light music, and more wine! [*Exit above.*

WIFE. *He's not in earnest, I hope, George, is he?*

CIT. *What if he be, sweetheart?* [80

WIFE. *Marry, if he be, George, I'll make bold to tell him he's an ingrant*[17] *old man to use his bed-fellow so scurvily.*

CIT. *What! how does he use her, honey?*

WIFE. *Marry, come up, sir saucebox! I think you'll take his part, will you not? Lord, how hot you are grown! you are a fine man, an you had a fine dog; it becomes you sweetly!* [89

CIT. *Nay, prithee, Nell, chide not; for, as I am an honest man and a true Christian grocer, I do not like his doings.*

WIFE. *I cry you mercy, then, George! you know we are all frail and full of infirmities.—D'ye hear, Master Merrythought? may I crave a word with you?*

MER., *appearing above.* Strike up lively, lads!

WIFE. *I had not thought, in truth, Master Merrythought, that a man of* [100 *your age and discretion, as I may say, being a gentleman, and therefore known by your gentle conditions,*[18] *could have used so little respect to the weakness of*

[17] ignorant. [18] qualities.

his wife; for your wife is your own flesh, the staff of your age, your yoke-fellow, with whose help you draw through the mire of this transitory world; nay, she's your own rib; and again—

MER., *singing.* [110

I come not hither for thee to teach,
I have no pulpit for thee to preach,
I would thou hadst kissed me under the breech,
As thou art a lady gay.

WIFE. *Marry, with a vengeance! I am heartily sorry for the poor gentlewoman: but, if I were thy wife, i' faith, greybeard, i' faith—*

CIT. *I prithee, sweet honeysuckle, be content.* [121

WIFE. *Give me such words, that am a gentlewoman born! hang him, hoary rascal! Get me some drink, George; I am almost molten with fretting: now, beshrew his knave's heart for it!* [Exit CITIZEN.

MER. Play me a light lavolta.[19] Come, be frolic.
Fill the good fellows wine. [130

MISTR. MER. Why, Master Merrythought, are you disposed to make me wait here? You'll open, I hope; I'll fetch them that shall open else.

MER. Good woman, if you will sing, I'll give you something; if not—[*Singing.*]

You are no love for me, Margaret;
I am no love for you.—

Come aloft, boys, aloft! [*Exit above.*

MISTR. MER. Now a churl's fart in [140 your teeth, sir!—Come, Mick, we'll not trouble him; 'a shall not ding us i' the teeth with his bread and his broth; that he shall not. Come, boy; I'll provide for thee, I warrant thee. We'll go to Master Venturewell's, the merchant: I'll get his letter to mine host of the Bell in Waltham; there I'll place thee with the tapster: will not that do well for thee, Mick? and let me alone for that old [150 cuckoldly knave your father; I'll use him in his kind, I warrant ye. [*Exeunt.*

[19] a lively dance.

Re-enter CITIZEN *with beer.*

WIFE. *Come, George, where's the beer?*

CIT. *Here, love.*

WIFE. *This old fornicating fellow will not out of my mind yet.—Gentlemen, I'll begin to you all; and I desire more of your acquaintance, with all my heart.* [Drinks.] *Fill the gentlemen some* [160 *beer, George.* [Enter BOY.] *Look, George, the little boy's come again; methinks he looks something like the Prince of Orange in his long stocking, if he had a little harness about his neck. George, I will have him dance Fading. Fading is a fine jig, I'll assure you, gentlemen.—Begin, brother.* [BOY dances.] *How*[20] *'a capers, sweetheart!—Now a turn o' the toe, and then tumble! cannot you tumble, youth?* [171

BOY. *No, indeed forsooth.*

WIFE. *Nor eat fire?*

BOY. *Neither.*

WIFE. *Why, then, I thank you heartily; there's twopence to buy you points*[21] *withal.*

ACT FOUR

SCENE I

In a street near VENTUREWELL'S *house,* JASPER *is giving a* BOY *a letter for the merchant. He has resolved to resort to trickery to win back* LUCE.

JAS. There, boy, deliver this; but do it well.
Hast thou provided me four lusty fellows,
Able to carry me? and art thou perfect
In all thy business? [10

BOY. Sir, you need not fear;
I have my lesson here, and cannot miss it:
The men are ready for you, and what else
Pertains to this employment.

JAS. There, my boy; [*Gives money.*
Take it, but buy no land.

BOY. Faith, sir, 'twere rare
To see so young a purchaser. I fly,
And on my wings carry your destiny.

[20] B. Now.

[21] tagged laces used to attach the hose or breeches to the doublet.

JAS. Go, and be happy! [*Exit* BOY.]
Now, my latest hope, [21
Forsake me not, but fling thy anchor out,
And let it hold! Stand fixed, thou rolling stone,
Till I enjoy my dearest! Hear me, all
You powers, that rule in men, celestial!
[*Exit.*

WIFE. *Go thy ways; thou art as crooked a sprig as ever grew in London. I warrant him, he'll come to some* [30 *naughty end or other; for his looks say no less: besides, his father (you know, George) is none of the best; you heard him take me up like a flirt-gill,*[1] *and sing bawdy songs upon me; but, i' faith, if I live, George—*

CIT. *Let me alone, sweetheart: I have a trick in my head shall lodge him in the Arches for one year, and make him sing* peccavi *ere I leave him; and yet he shall never know who hurt him neither.* [41

WIFE. *Do, my good George, do!*

CIT. *What shall we have Ralph do now, boy?*

BOY. *You shall have what you will, sir.*

CIT. *Why, so, sir; go and fetch me him, then, and let the Sophy of Persia come and christen him a child.*

BOY. *Believe me, sir, that will not do so well; 'tis stale; it has been had before at the Red Bull.* [51

WIFE. *George, let Ralph travel over great hills, and let him be very weary, and come to the King of Cracovia's house, covered with* [*black*] *velvet; and there let the king's daughter stand in her window, all in beaten gold, combing her golden locks with a comb of ivory; and let her spy Ralph, and fall in love with him, and come down to him, and carry* [60 *him into her father's house; and then let Ralph talk with her.*

CIT. *Well said, Nell; it shall be so.—Boy, let's ha't done quickly.*

BOY. *Sir, if you will imagine all this to be done already, you shall hear them talk together; but we cannot present a house covered with black velvet, and a lady in beaten gold.* [69

[1] a loose woman.

CIT. *Sir boy, let's ha't as you can, then.*

BOY. *Besides, it will show ill-favoredly to have a grocer's prentice to court a king's daughter.*

CIT. *Will it so, sir? you are well read in histories! I pray you, what was Sir Dagonet? was not he prentice to a grocer in London? Read the play of "The Four Prentices of London", where they toss their pikes so. I pray you, fetch him in, sir, fetch him in.* [80

BOY. *It shall be done.—It is not our fault, gentlemen.* [Exit.

WIFE. *Now we shall see fine doings, I warrant 'ee, George.*

SCENE II

In a hall in the KING OF MOLDAVIA'S *Court,* RALPH, *attended by* TIM *and* GEORGE, *is about to bid farewell to* POMPIONA.

WIFE. *Oh, here they come! how prettily the King of Cracovia's daughter is dressed!*

CIT. *Ay, Nell, it is the fashion of that country, I warrant thee.*

POM. Welcome, Sir Knight, unto my father's court, [11
King of Moldavia; unto me, Pompiona,
His daughter dear! But, sure, you do not like
Your entertainment, that will stay with us
No longer but a night.

RAL. Damsel right fair,
I am on many sad adventures bound,
That call me forth into the wilderness; [20
Besides, my horse's back is something galled,
Which will enforce me ride a sober pace.
But many thanks, fair lady, be to you
For using errant knight with courtesy!

POM. But say, brave knight, what is your name and birth?

RAL. My name is Ralph; I am an Englishman
(As true as steel, a hearty Englishman)
And prentice to a grocer in the Strand [31
By deed indent, of which I have one part:
But, fortune calling me to follow arms,

On me this holy order I did take
Of Burning Pestle, which in all men's eyes
I bear, confounding ladies' enemies.
POM. Oft have I heard of your brave countrymen
And fertile soil and store of wholesome food;
My father oft will tell me of a drink
In England found, and nipitato[2] called,
Which driveth all the sorrow from your hearts.
RAL. Lady, 'tis true; you need not lay your lips
To better nipitato than there is.
POM. And of a wild fowl he will often speak,
Which "powdered[3] beef and mustard" calléd is;
For there have been great wars 'twixt us and you;
But truly, Ralph, it was not 'long of me.
Tell me then, Ralph, could you contented be
To wear a lady's favor in your shield?
RAL. I am a knight of [a] religious order,
And will not wear a favor of a lady
That trusts in Antichrist and false traditions.
CIT. *Well said, Ralph! convert her, if thou canst.*
RAL. Besides, I have a lady of my own
In merry England, for whose virtuous sake
I took these arms; and Susan is her name,
A cobbler's maid in Milk Street, whom I vow
Ne'er to forsake whilst life and Pestle last.
POM. Happy that cobbling dame, whoe'er she be,
That for her own, dear Ralph, hath gotten thee!
Unhappy I, that ne'er shall see the day
To see thee more, that bear'st my heart away!
RAL. Lady, farewell; I needs must take my leave.

[2] strong ale. [3] salted.

POM. Hard-hearted Ralph, that ladies dost deceive!
CIT. *Hark thee, Ralph: there's money for thee;* [gives money] *give something in the King of Cracovia's house; be not beholding to him.*
RAL. Lady, before I go, I must remember
Your father's officers, who, truth to tell,
Have been about me very diligent:
Hold up thy snowy hand, thou princely maid!
There's twelve-pence for your father's chamberlain;
And [there's] another shilling for his cook,
For, by my troth, the goose was roasted well;
And twelve-pence for your father's horse-keeper,
For 'nointing my horse-back, and for his butter
There is another shilling; to the maid
That washed my boot-hose there's an English groat
And two-pence to the boy that wiped my boots;
And last, fair lady, there is for yourself
Three-pence, to buy you pins at Bumbo Fair.
POM. Full many thanks; and I will keep them safe
Till all the heads be off, for thy sake, Ralph.
RAL. Advance, my squire and dwarf! I cannot stay.
POM. Thou kill'st my heart in parting thus away. [*Exeunt.*
WIFE. *I commend Ralph yet, that he will not stoop to a Cracovian; there's properer women in London than any are there, I-wis.*

SCENE III

VENTUREWELL, *having got* LUCE *safely home again, is determined she shall gad no more.* HUMPHREY, LUCE, *and a* BOY *are with him.*

WIFE. *But here comes Master Humphrey, and his love again now, George.*
CIT. *Ay, cony; peace.*

VENT. Go, get you up; I will not be entreated;
And, gossip mine, I'll keep you sure hereafter
From gadding out again with boys and unthrifts.
Come, they are women's tears; I know your fashion.—
Go, sirrah, lock her in, and keep the key
Safe as you love your life. [*Exeunt* LUCE *and* BOY.] Now, my son Humphrey,
You may both rest assurëd of my love
In this, and reap your own desire.
HUMP. I see this love you speak of, through your daughter,
Although the hole be little; and hereafter
Will yield the like in all I may or can,
Fitting a Christian and a gentleman.
VENT. I do believe you, my good son, and thank you;
For 'twere an impudence to think you flattered.
HUMP. It were, indeed; but shall I tell you why?
I have been beaten twice about the lie.
VENT. Well, son, no more of compliment. My daughter
Is yours again: appoint the time and take her;
We'll have no stealing for it; I myself
And some few of our friends will see you married.
HUMP. I would you would, i' faith! for, be it known,
I ever was afraid to lie alone.
VENT. Some three days hence, then.
HUMP. Three days! let me see:
'Tis somewhat of the most; yet I agree,
Because I mean against[4] the appointed day
To visit all my friends in new array.

Enter SERVANT.

SER. Sir, there's a gentlewoman without would speak with your worship.
VENT. What is she?
SER. Sir, I asked her not.
VENT. Bid her come in. [*Exit* SERVANT.

[4] before.

Enter MISTRESS MERRYTHOUGHT *and* MICHAEL.

MISTR. MER. Peace be to your worship! I come as a poor suitor to you, sir, in the behalf of this child.
VENT. Are you not wife to Merrythought?
MISTR. MER. Yes, truly. Would I had ne'er seen his eyes! he has undone me and himself and his children; and there he lives at home, and sings and hoits[5] and revels among his drunken companions! but, I warrant you, where to get a penny to put bread in his mouth he knows not: and therefore, if it like your worship, I would entreat your letter to the honest host of the Bell in Wal- tham, that I may place my child under the protection of his tapster, in some settled course of life.
VENT. I'm glad the heavens have heard my prayers. Thy husband,
When I was ripe in sorrows, laughed at me;
Thy son, like an unthankful wretch, I having
Redeemed him from his fall and made him mine,
To show his love again, first stole my daughter,
Then wronged this gentleman, and, last of all,
Gave me that grief had almost brought me down
Unto my grave, had not a stronger hand
Relieved my sorrows. Go, and weep as I did,
And be unpitied; for I here profess
An everlasting hate to all thy name.
MISTR. MER. Will you so, sir? how say you by that?—Come, Mick; let him keep his wind to cool his porridge. We'll go to thy nurse's, Mick: she knits silk stockings, boy; and we'll knit too, boy, and be beholding to none of them all. [*Exit with* MICHAEL.

Enter the BOY *who is the bearer of* JASPER'S *letter.*

BOY. Sir, I take it you are the master of this house.

[5] riots.

VENT. How then, boy?
BOY. Then to yourself, sir, comes this letter. [*Gives letter.*
VENT. From whom, my pretty boy?
BOY. From him that was your servant; but no more [109
Shall that name ever be, for he is dead:
Grief of your purchased anger broke his heart.
I saw him die, and from his hand received
This paper, with a charge to bring it hither:
Read it, and satisfy yourself in all.
VENT. "Sir, that I have wronged your love I must confess; in which I have purchased to myself, besides mine own [120 undoing, the ill opinion of my friends. Let not your anger, good sir, outlive me, but suffer me to rest in peace with your forgiveness: let my body (if a dying man may so much prevail with you) be brought to your daughter, that she may truly know my hot flames are now buried, and withal receive a testimony of the zeal I bore her virtue. Farewell for ever, and be ever happy! JASPER." [130
God's hand is great in this: I do forgive him;
Yet I am glad he's quiet, where I hope
He will not bite again.—Boy, bring the body,
And let him have his will, if that be all.
BOY. 'Tis here without, sir.
VENT. So, sir; if you please,
You may conduct it in; I do not fear it.
HUMP. I'll be your usher, boy; for, [140 though I say it,
He owed me something once, and well did pay it. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV

In the room to which she has been confined, LUCE *laments her hard lot.*

LUCE. If there be any punishment inflicted
Upon the miserable more than yet I feel,
Let it together seize me, and at once
Press down my soul! I cannot bear the pain
Of these delaying tortures.—Thou that art [10
The end of all, and the sweet rest of all,
Come, come, O Death! bring me to thy peace;
And blot out all the memory I nourish
Both of my father and my cruel friend!—
Oh, wretched maid, still living to be wretched,
To be a say[6] to Fortune in her changes,
And grow to number times and woes together, [20
How happy had I been, if, being born,
My grave had been my cradle!

Enter SERVANT.

SER. By your leave,
Young mistress, here's a boy hath brought a coffin:
What 'a would say, I know not; but your father
Charged me to give you notice. Here they come. [*Exit.* [30

Enter BOY, *and two Men bearing a coffin.*

LUCE. For me I hope 'tis come, and 'tis most welcome.
BOY. Fair mistress, let me not add greater grief
To that great store you have already. Jasper
(That whilst he lived was yours, now dead
And here enclosed) commanded me to bring [41
His body hither, and to crave a tear
From those fair eyes (though he deserved not pity),
To deck his funeral; for so he bid me
Tell her for whom he died.
LUCE. He shall have many.—
Good friends, depart a little, whilst I take
My leave of this dead man, that once I [50 loved.— [*Exeunt* BOY *and Men.*
Hold yet a little, life! and then I give thee
To thy first heavenly being. Oh, my friend!
Hast thou deceived me thus, and got before me?
I shall not long be after. But, believe me,

[6] subject for experiment.

Thou wert too cruel, Jasper, 'gainst thyself,
In punishing the fault I could have pardoned,
With so untimely death: thou didst not wrong me,
But ever wert most kind, most true, most loving;
And I the most unkind, most false, most cruel!
Didst thou but ask a tear? I'll give thee all,
Even all my eyes can pour down, all my sighs,
And all myself, before thou goest from me.
These[7] are but sparing rites; but, if thy soul
Be yet about this place, and can behold
And see what I prepare to deck thee with,
It shall go up, borne on the wings of peace,
And satisfied. First will I sing thy dirge,
Then kiss thy pale lips, and then die myself,
And fill one coffin and one grave together.

[*Sings.*]

Come, you whose loves are dead,
And, whiles I sing,
Weep, and wring
Every hand, and every head
Bind with cypress and sad yew,
Ribands black and candles blue
For him that was of men most true!

Come with heavy moaning,
And on his grave
Let him have
Sacrifice of sighs and groaning;
Let him have fair flowers enow,
White and purple, green and yellow,
For him that was of men most true!

Thou sable cloth, sad cover of my joys,
I lift thee up, and thus I meet with death.

[*Removes the cloth.* JASPER *rises out of the coffin.*

JAS. And thus you meet the living.

LUCE. Save me, Heaven!

JAS. Nay, do not fly me, fair; I am no spirit:
Look better on me; do you know me yet?

LUCE. Oh, thou dear shadow of my friend!

JAS. Dear substance!
I swear I am no shadow; feel my hand;
It is the same it was; I am your Jasper,
Your Jasper that's yet living, and yet loving.
Pardon my rash attempt, my foolish proof
I put in practice of your constancy;
For sooner should my sword have drunk my blood,
And set my soul at liberty, than drawn
The least drop from that body; for which boldness
Doom me to any thing; if death, I take it,
And willingly.

LUCE. This death I'll give you for it [*Kisses him.*
So; now I am satisfied you are no spirit,
But my own truest, truest, truest friend,
Why do you come thus to me?

JAS. First, to see you;
Then to convey you hence.

LUCE. It cannot be;
For I am locked up here, and watched at all hours,
That 'tis impossible for me to scape.

JAS. Nothing more possible. Within this coffin
Do you convey yourself: let me alone;
I have the wits of twenty men about me;
Only I crave the shelter of your closet
A little, and then fear me not. Creep in,
That they may presently convey you hence.
Fear nothing, dearest love: I'll be your second; [LUCE *lies down in the coffin, and* JASPER *covers her with the cloth.*
Lie close: so; all goes well yet.—[*Calling.*] Boy!

Re-enter BOY *and Men.*

BOY. At hand, sir.

JAS. Convey away the coffin, and be wary.

BOY. 'Tis done already. [*Exeunt Men with the coffin.*

[7] B. There.

JAS. Now must I go conjure. [*Exit into a closet.* [161

Enter VENTUREWELL.

VENT. Boy, boy!

BOY. Your servant, sir.

VENT. Do me this kindness, boy (hold, here's a crown);
Before thou bury the body of this fellow,
Carry it to his old merry father, and salute him
From me, and bid him sing; he hath cause. [171

BOY. I will, sir.

VENT. And then bring me word what tune he is in,
And have another crown; but do it truly.
I have fitted him a bargain now will vex him.

BOY. God bless your worship's health, sir!

VENT. Farewell, boy! [*Exeunt severally.* [181

SCENE V

MERRYTHOUGHT *is in front of his house.*

WIFE. *Ah, old Merrythought, art thou there again? let's hear some of thy songs.*

MER., *singing.*

Who can sing a merrier note
Than he that cannot change a groat?

Not a denier left, and yet my heart leaps: I do wonder yet, as old as I am, that any man will follow a trade, or [9 serve, that may sing and laugh, and walk the streets. My wife and both my sons are I know not where; I have nothing left, nor know I how to come by meat to supper; yet am I merry still, for I know I shall find it upon the table at six o'clock; therefore, hang thought!

[*Singing.*]

I would not be a serving-man,
To carry the cloak-bag still;
Nor would I be a falconer, [20
The greedy hawks to fill;
But I would be in a good house,
And have a good master too;
But I would eat and drink of the best,
And no work would I do.

This is it that keeps life and soul together, mirth; this is the philosopher's stone that they write so much on, that keeps a man ever young. [29

Enter a BOY.

BOY. Sir, they say they know all your money is gone, and they will trust you for no more drink.

MER. Will they not? let 'em choose! The best is, I have mirth at home, and need not send abroad for that; let them keep their drink to themselves.

[*Singing.*]

For Jillian of Berry, she dwells on a hill,
And she hath good beer and ale to sell, [40
And of good fellows she thinks no ill;
And thither will we go now, now, now,
And thither will we go now.

And when you have made a little stay,
You need not ask what is to pay,
But kiss your hostess, and go your way;
And thither will we go now, now, now,
And thither will we go now.

Enter a SECOND BOY.

2 BOY. Sir, I can get no bread for supper. [51

MER. Hang bread and supper! let's preserve our mirth, and we shall never feel hunger, I'll warrant you. Let's have a catch, boys; follow me, come.

ALL, *singing.*

Ho, ho, nobody at home!
Meat, nor drink, nor money ha' we none.
Fill the pot, Eedy,
Never more need I. [60

MER. So, boys; enough. Follow me. Let's change our place, and we shall laugh afresh. [*Exeunt.*

WIFE. *Let him go, George; 'a shall not have any countenance from us, nor a good word from any i' the company, if I may strike stroke in't.*

CIT. *No more 'a sha' not, love. But, Nell, I will have Ralph do a very notable matter now, to the eternal honor and glory of all grocers.—Sirrah! you there, boy! Can none of you hear?* [72

Enter Boy.

Boy. *Sir, your pleasure?*

Cit. *Let Ralph come out on May-day in the morning, and speak upon a conduit, with all his scarfs about him, and his feathers, and his rings, and his knacks.*

Boy. *Why, sir, you do not think of our plot; what will become of that, then?* [80

Cit. *Why, sir, I care not what become on't: I'll have him come out, or I'll fetch him out myself; I'll have something done in honor of the city: besides, he hath been long enough upon adventures. Bring him out quickly; or, if I come in amongst you—*

Boy. *Well, sir, he shall come out; but if our play miscarry, sir, you are like to pay for't.* [90

Cit. *Bring him away, then!* [Exit Boy.

Wife. *This will be brave, i' faith! George, shall not he dance the morris too, for the credit of the Strand?*

Cit. *No, sweetheart, it will be too much for the boy.*

Scene VI.

Enter Ralph, *dressed as a May-lord.*

Cit. *Oh, there he is, Nell! he's reasonable well in reparel: but he has not rings enough.*

Ral. London, to thee I do present the merry month of May;
Let each true subject be content to hear me what I say:
For from the top of conduit-head, as plainly may appear, [10
I will both tell my name to you, and wherefore I came here.
My name is Ralph, by due descent, though not ignoble I,
Yet far inferior to the stock[8] of gracious grocery;
And by the common counsel of my fellows in the Strand,
With gilded staff and crossëd scarf, the May-lord here I stand. [20
Rejoice, O English hearts, rejoice! rejoice, O lovers dear!
Rejoice, O city, town, and country! rejoice, eke every shire!
For now the fragrant flowers do spring and sprout in seemly sort,
The little birds do sit and sing, the lambs do make fine sport;
And now the birchen-tree doth bud, that makes the schoolboy cry; [30
The morris rings, while hobby-horse doth foot it featously;
The lords and ladies now abroad, for their disport and play,
Do kiss sometimes upon the grass, and sometimes in the hay;
Now butter with a leaf of sage is good to purge the blood;
Fly Venus and phlebotomy, for they are neither good; [40
Now little fish on tender stone begin to cast their bellies,[9]
And sluggish snails, that erst were mewed, do creep out of their shellies;
The rumbling rivers now do warm, for little boys to paddle;
The sturdy steed now goes to grass, and up they hang his saddle;
The heavy hart, the bellowing buck, the rascal,[10] and the pricket,[11] [51
Are now among the yeoman's peas, and leave the fearful thicket:
And be like them, O you, I say, of this same noble town,
And lift aloft your velvet heads, and, slipping off your gown,
With bells on legs, and napkins clean unto your shoulders tied,
With scarfs and garters as you please, and "Hey for our town!" cried, [61
March out, and show your willing minds, by twenty and by twenty,
To Hogsdon or to Newington, where ale and cakes are plenty;
And let it ne'er be said for shame, that we the youths of London
Lay thrumming of our caps at home, and left our custom undone.
Up, then, I say, both young and old, both man and maid a-maying, [71
With drums, and guns that bounce aloud, and merry tabor playing!

[8] B. flock.

[9] spawn.
[10] A lean deer.
[11] a buck in his second year.

Which to prolong, God save our king, and send his country peace,
And root out treason from the land! and so, my friends, I cease. [*Exit.*

ACT FIVE

Scene I

VENTUREWELL *is in a room in his house, considering the sort of wedding he will have for his daughter.*

VENT. I will have no great store of company at the wedding; a couple of neighbors and their wives; and we will have a capon in stewed broth, with marrow, and a good piece of beef stuck with rosemary. [9

Enter JASPER, *with his face mealed.*

JAS. Forbear thy pains, fond man! it is too late.
VENT. Heaven bless me! Jasper!
JAS. Ay, I am his ghost,
Whom thou hast injured for his constant love;
Fond worldly wretch! who dost not understand
In death that true hearts cannot parted be. [20
First know, thy daughter is quite borne away
On wings of angels, through the liquid air,
To far out of thy reach, and never more
Shalt thou behold her face; but she and I
Will in another world enjoy our loves,
Where neither father's anger, poverty,
Nor any cross that troubles earthly men,
Shall make us sever our united hearts. [30
And never shalt thou sit or be alone
In any place, but I will visit thee
With ghastly looks, and put into thy mind
The great offences which thou didst to me.
When thou art at thy table with thy friends,
Merry in heart, and filled with swelling wine, [40
I'll come in midst of all thy pride and mirth,
Invisible to all men but thyself,
And whisper such a sad tale in thine ear
Shall make thee let the cup fall from thy hand,
And stand as mute and pale as death itself.
VENT. Forgive me, Jasper! Oh, what might I do, [50
Tell me, to satisfy thy troubled ghost?
JAS. There is no means; too late thou think'st on this.
VENT. But tell me what were best for me to do?
JAS. Repent thy deed, and satisfy my father,
And beat fond Humphrey out of thy doors. [*Exit.*
WIFE. *Look, George; his very ghost would have folks beaten.* [61

Enter HUMPHREY.

HUMP. Father, my bride is gone, fair Mistress Luce:
My soul's the fount of vengeance, mischief's sluice.
VENT. Hence, fool, out of my sight with thy fond passion!
Thou hast undone me. [*Beats him.*
HUMP. Hold, my father dear, [70
For Luce thy daughter's sake, that had no peer!
VENT. Thy father, fool? [*Beats him.*] There's some blows more; begone.—
<Jasper, I hope thy ghost be well appeased
To see thy will performed. Now will I go
To satisfy thy father for thy wrongs.>
[*Exit.* [81
HUMP. What shall I do? I have been beaten twice,
And Mistress Luce is gone. Help me, device!
Since my true love is gone, I never more,
Whilst I do live, upon the sky will pore;
But in the dark will wear out my shoe-soles
In passion in Saint Faith's church under Paul's. [*Exit.* [91
WIFE. *George, call Ralph hither; if you*

love me, call Ralph hither: I have the bravest thing for him to do, George; prithee, call him quickly.

Cit., calling. *Ralph! why, Ralph, boy!*

Enter Ralph.

Ralph. *Here, sir!*

Cit. *Come hither, Ralph; come to thy mistress, boy.* [100

Wife. *Ralph, I would have thee call all the youths together in battle-ray, with drums, and guns, and flags, and march to Mile End in pompous fashion, and there exhort your soldiers to be merry and wise, and to keep their beards from burning, Ralph; and then skirmish, and let your flags fly, and cry, "Kill, kill, kill!" My husband shall lend you his jerkin, Ralph; and there's a scarf; for the rest, the* [110 *house shall furnish you, and we'll pay for't. Do it bravely, Ralph; and think before whom you perform, and what person you represent.*

Ral. *I warrant you, mistress; if I do it not, for the honor of the city and the credit of my master, let me never hope for freedom!*

Wife. *'Tis well spoken, i' faith. Go thy ways; thou art a spark indeed.* [120

Cit. *Ralph, Ralph, double your files bravely, Ralph!*

Ral. *I warrant you, sir.* [Exit.

Cit. *Let him look narrowly to his service; I shall take him else. I was there myself a pikeman once, in the hottest of the day, wench; had my feather shot sheer away, the fringe of my pike burnt off with powder, my pate broken with a scouring-stick;*[1] *and yet, I thank God, I am here.* [Drums within. [131

Wife. *Hark, George, the drums!*

Cit. *Ran, tan, tan, tan; ran, tan! Oh, wench, an thou hadst but seen little Ned of Aldgate, Drum-Ned, how he made it roar again, and laid on like a tyrant, and then struck softly till the ward came up, and then thundered again, and together we go! "Sa, sa, sa, bounce!" quoth the guns; "Courage, my hearts!" quoth* [140 *the captains; "Saint George!" quoth the pikemen; and withal, here they lay, and there they lay; and yet for all this I am here, wench.*

Wife. *Be thankful for it, George; for indeed 'tis wonderful.*

[1] the cleaning-rod of a gun.

Scene II

Ralph *and a company of soldiers (including* Hammerton *and* Greengoose*) march into a London street, with drums and colors.*

Ral. March fair, my hearts! Lieutenant, beat the rear up.—Ancient, let your colors fly; but have a great care of the butchers' hooks at Whitechapel; they have been the death of many a fair ancient.—Open your files, that I may [10 take a view both of your persons and munition.—Sergeant, call a muster.

Ser. A stand!—William Hammerton, pewterer!

Ham. Here, captain!

Ral. A corselet and a Spanish pike; 'tis well: can you shake it with a terror?

Ham. I hope so, captain.

Ral. Charge upon me. [*He charges on* Ralph.]—'Tis with the weakest: put [20 more strength, William Hammerton, more strength. As you were again!—Proceed, Sergeant.

Ser. George Greengoose, poulterer!

Green. Here!

Ral. Let me see your piece, neighbor Greengoose: when was she shot in?

Green. An't like you, master captain, I made a shot even now, partly to scour her, and partly for audacity. [30

Ral. It should seem so certainly, for her breath is yet inflamed; besides, there is a main fault in the touchhole; it runs and stinketh; and I tell you moreover, and believe it, ten such touchholes would breed the pox in the army. Get you a feather, neighbor, get you a feather, sweet oil, and paper, and your piece may do well enough yet. Where's your powder?

Green. Here. [40

Ral. What, in a paper! as I am a soldier and a gentleman, it craves a martial court! you ought to die for't. Where's your horn? answer me to that.

GREEN. An't like you, sir, I was oblivious.

RAL. It likes me not you should be so; 'tis a shame for you, and a scandal to all our neighbors, being a man of worth and estimation, to leave your horn behind [50 you: I am afraid 'twill breed example. But let me tell you no more on't.—Stand, till I view you all.—What's become o' the nose of your flask?

1 SOL. Indeed, la, captain, 'twas blown away with powder.

RAL. Put on a new one at the city's charge.—Where's the stone of this piece?

2 SOL. The drummer took it out to light tobacco. [60

RAL. 'Tis a fault, my friend; put it in again.—You want a nose—and you, a stone.—Sergeant, take a note on't, for I mean to stop it in the pay.—Remove, and march! [*They march.*] Soft and fair, gentlemen, soft and fair! double your files! as you were! faces about! Now, you with the sodden[2] face, keep in there! Look to your match, sirrah, it will be in your fellow's flask anon. So; make a [70 crescent now; advance your pikes; stand and give ear!

[*Having marched about the stage, they are now supposed to have arrived at Mile End.*]

Gentlemen, countrymen, friends, and my fellow-soldiers, I have brought you this day, from the shops of security and the counters of content, to measure out in these furious fields honor by the [80 ell, and prowess by the pound. Let it not, oh, let it not, I say, be told hereafter, the noble issue of this city fainted; but bear yourselves in this fair action like men, valiant men, and free men! Fear not the face of the enemy, nor the noise of the guns, for, believe me, brethren, the rude rumbling of a brewer's car[t] is far more terrible, of which you have a daily experience; neither let the stink of pow- [90 der offend you, since a more valiant stink is nightly with you.

To a resolved mind his home is everywhere:
I speak not this to take away
The hope of your return; for you shall see
(I do not doubt it), and that very shortly,
Your loving wives again and your sweet children, [101
Whose care doth bear you company in baskets.
Remember, then, whose cause you have in hand,
And, like a sort[3] of true-born scavengers,
Scour me this famous realm of enemies.
I have no more to say but this:
Stand to your tacklings, lads, and show to the world [110
You can as well brandish a sword as shake an apron.
Saint George, and on, my hearts!

ALL. Saint George, Saint George! [*Exeunt.*

WIFE. *'Twas well done, Ralph! I'll send thee a cold capon a-field and a bottle of March beer; and, it may be, come myself to see thee.* [119

CIT. *Nell, the boy hath deceived me much; I did not think it had been in him. He has performed such a matter, wench, that, if I live, next year I'll have him captain of the galley-foist,*[4] *or I'll want my will.*

SCENE III

MERRYTHOUGHT, *in his house, is as merry as ever.*

MER. Yet, I thank God, I break not a wrinkle more than I had. Not a stoup,[5] boys? Care, live with cats: I defy thee! My heart is as sound as an oak; and, though I want drink to wet my whistle, I can sing;

[*singing*]

Come no more there, boys, come no [10 more there;
For we shall never whilst we live come any more there.

Enter BOY, *and two Men bearing a coffin*

BOY. God save you, sir!

[2] bloated.

[3] company.

[4] the Lord Mayor's barge.

[5] a drinking vessel.

MER. It's a brave boy. Canst thou sing?

BOY. Yes, sir, I can sing; but 'tis not so necessary at this time.

MER., *singing.*

Sing we, and chant it;
Whilst love doth grant it.

BOY. Sir, sir, if you knew what I have brought you, you would have little list to sing.

MER., *singing.*

Oh, the Mimon round,
Full long I have thee sought,
And now I have thee found,
And what hast thou here brought?

BOY. A coffin, sir, and your dead son Jasper in it. [*Exit with Men.*

MER. Dead! [*Sings.*]

Why, farewell he!
Thou wast a bonny boy,
And I did love thee.

Enter JASPER.

JAS. Then, I pray you, sir, do so still.

MER. Jasper's ghost! [*Sings.*]

Thou art welcome from Stygian lake so soon;
Declare to me what wondrous things in Pluto's court are done.

JAS. By my troth, sir, I ne'er came there; 'tis too hot for me, sir.

MER. A merry ghost, a very merry ghost! [*Sings.*]

And where is your true love? Oh, where is yours?

JAS. Marry, look you, sir! [*Removes the cloth.* LUCE *rises up out of the coffin.*

MER. Ah, ha! art thou good at that, i' faith?

[*Sings.*]

With hey, trixy, terlery-whiskin,
The world it runs on wheels:
When the young man's . . . ,[6]
Up goes the maiden's heels.

[6] So in quartos; but we may supply "frisking."

MISTR. MER., *within.* What, Master Merrythought! will you not let's in? what do you think shall become of us?

MER., *singing.*

What voice is that that calleth at our door?

MISTR. MER., *within.* You know me well enough; I am sure I have not been such a stranger to you.

MER., *singing.*

And some they whistled, and some they sung,
Hey, down, down!
And some did loudly say,
Ever, as the Lord Barnet's horn blew,
"Away, Musgrave, away!"

MISTR. MER., *within.* You will not have us starve here, will you, Master Merrythought?

JAS. Nay, good sir, be persuaded; she is my mother:
If her offences have been great against you,
Let your own love remember she is yours;
And so forgive her.

LUCE. Good Master Merrythought, Let me entreat you; I will not be denied.

MISTR. MER., *within.* Why, Master Merrythought, will you be a vexed thing still?

MER. Woman, I take you to my love again; but you shall sing before you enter; therefore dispatch your song, and so come in.

MISTR. MER., *within.* Well, you must have your will, when all's done.—Mick, what song canst thou sing, boy?

MIC., *within.* I can sing none, forsooth, but "A Lady's Daughter, of Paris" properly.

MISTR. MER. AND MIC., *singing.*

"It was a lady's daughter," &c.

[MERRYTHOUGHT *opens the door.*

Enter MISTRESS MERRYTHOUGHT *and* MICHAEL.

MER. Come, you're welcome home again.

[*Singing.*]

If such danger be in playing,
And jest must to earnest turn,
You shall go no more a-maying—

VENT., *within.* Are you within, sir? Master Merrythought!

JAS. It is my master's voice: good sir, go hold him [111
In talk, whilst we convey ourselves into
Some inward room. [*Exit with* LUCE.

MER. What are you? are you merry? You must be very merry, if you enter.

VENT., *within.* I am, sir.

MER. Sing, then.

VENT., *within.* Nay, good sir, open to me.

MER. Sing, I say, [120
Or, by the merry heart, you come not in!

VENT., *within.* Well, sir, I'll sing.

[*Sings.*]

"Fortune, my foe," &c.

[MERRYTHOUGHT *opens the door.*

Enter VENTUREWELL.

MER. You are welcome, sir, you are welcome: you see your entertainment; pray you, be merry.

VENT. Oh, Master Merrythought, I am come to ask you [131
Forgiveness for the wrongs I offered you
And your most virtuous son! they're infinite;
Yet my contrition shall be more than they:
I do confess my hardness broke his heart,
For which just Heaven hath given me punishment
More than my age can carry; his wandering spirit, [141
Not yet at rest, pursues me everywhere,
Crying, "I'll haunt thee for thy cruelty."
My daughter, she is gone, I know not how,
Taken invisible, and whether living
Or in [the] grave, 'tis yet uncertain to me.
Oh, Master Merrythought, these are the weights [150
Will sink me to my grave! forgive me, sir.

MER. Why, sir, I do forgive you; and be merry;
And, if the wag in's lifetime played the knave,
Can you forgive him too?

VENT. With all my heart, sir.

MER. Speak it again, and heartily.

VENT. I do, sir; [160
Now, by my soul, I do.

Re-enter LUCE *and* JASPER.

MER., *singing.*

With that came out his paramour;
She was as white as the lily flower:
Hey, troul, troly, loly!
With that came out her own dear knight;
He was as true as ever did fight, &c.

Sir, if you will forgive 'em, clap their hands together; there's no more to be said i' the matter. [171

VENT. I do, I do.

CIT. *I do not like this. Peace, boys! Hear me, one of you: everybody's part is come to an end but Ralph's, and he's left out.*

BOY. *'Tis 'long of yourself, sir; we have nothing to do with his part.*

CIT., calling. *Ralph, come away!—Make [an end] on him, as you have done of the rest, boys; come.* [181

WIFE. *Now, good husband, let him come out and die.*

CIT. *He shall, Nell.—Ralph, come away quickly, and die, boy!*

BOY. *'Twill be very unfit he should die, sir, upon no occasion—and in a comedy, too.*

CIT. *Take you no care of that, sir boy; is not his part at an end, think you,* [190 *when he's dead?—Come away, Ralph!*

Enter RALPH, *with a forked arrow through his head.*

RAL. When I was mortal, this my costive corps
Did lap up figs and raisins in the Strand;
Where sitting, I espied a lovely dame,

Whose master wrought with lingel[7] and with awl,
And underground he vampëd many a boot.
Straight did her love prick forth me, tender sprig,
To follow feats of arms in warlike wise
Through Waltham Desert; where I did perform
Many achievements, and did lay on ground
Huge Barbaroso, that insulting giant,
And all his captives[8] set at liberty.
Then honor pricked me from my native soil
Into Moldavia, where I gained the love
Of Pompiana, his belovëd daughter,
But yet proved constant to the black-thumbed maid
Susan, and scornëd Pompiana's love;
Yet liberal I was, and gave her pins,
And money for her father's officers.
I then returnëd home, and thrust myself
In action, and by all men chosen was
Lord of the May, where I did flourish it,
With scarfs and rings, and posy in my hand.
After this action I preferrëd was,
And chosen city-captain at Mile End,
With hat and feather, and with leading-staff,
And trained my men, and brought them all off clear,
Save one man that berayed him[9] with the noise.
But all these things I, Ralph, did undertake
Only for my belovëd Susan's sake.
Then coming home, and sitting in my shop
With apron blue, Death came into my stall
To cheapen aqua vitae; but, ere I
Could take the bottle down and fill a taste,
Death caught a pound of pepper in his hand,
And sprinkled all my face and body o'er,
And in an instant vanishëd away.

[7] shoemaker's thread.
[8] B inserts "soon."
[9] befouled himself.

CIT. *'Tis a pretty fiction, i' faith.*

RAL. Then took I up my bow and shaft in hand,
And walked into Moorfields to cool myself;
But there grim cruel Death met me again,
And shot this forkëd arrow through my head;
And now I faint; therefore be warned by me,
My fellows every one, of forkëd heads!—
Farewell, all you good boys in merry London!
Ne'er shall we more upon Shrove Tuesday meet,
And pluck down houses of iniquity.
(My pain increaseth.) I shall never more
Hold open, whilst another pumps, both legs,
Nor daub a satin gown with rotten eggs;
Set up a stake, oh, never more I shall!
I die! fly, fly, my soul, to Grocers' Hall!
Oh, oh, oh, &c. [*Dies.*

WIFE. *Well said, Ralph! do your obeisance to the gentlemen, and go your ways: well said, Ralph!* [RALPH *rises, makes obeisance, and exit.*

MER. Methinks all we, thus kindly and unexpectedly reconciled, should not depart without a song.

VENT. A good motion!

MER. Strike up, then!

SONG

Better music ne'er was known
Than a quire of hearts in one.
Let each other, that hath been
Troubled with the gall or spleen,
Learn of us to keep his brow
Smooth and plain, as ours are now!
Sing! though before the hour of dying
He shall rise, and then be crying,
"Hey, ho, 'tis nought but mirth
That keeps the body from the earth!"

[*Exeunt.*

CIT. *Come, Nell, shall we go? the play's done.*

WIFE. *Nay, by my faith, George, I have more manners than so; I'll speak to these gentlemen first—I thank you*

all, gentlemen, for your patience and countenance to Ralph, a poor fatherless child; and, if I might see you at my house, it should go hard but I would [300 *have a pottle of wine and a pipe of tobacco for you: for, truly, I hope you do like the youth, but I would be glad to know the truth; I refer it to your own discretions, whether you will applaud him or no; for I will wink, and, whilst, you shall do what you will.* [The Audience applauds.] *I thank you with all my heart. God give you good night!—Come, George.* [Exeunt. [310

THE MAID'S TRAGEDY

BY

FRANCIS BEAUMONT

AND

JOHN FLETCHER

INTRODUCTION

Undoubtedly the greatest of the Beaumont and Fletcher plays and one of the finest tragedies of the entire period is "The Maid's Tragedy," which was acted at Court by the King's men early in 1613, but was almost certainly seen on the public stage before the end of October, 1611. The likeliest date for its first production is about the middle of 1611. It was first printed, anonymously, in 1619. An enlarged and improved version, also anonymous, appeared three years later; and in 1630 was published the first quarto with an attribution to Beaumont and Fletcher. Four other quartos followed prior to the issue of the second folio, which also contained the play. There is plenty of evidence that both authors were concerned in its composition, even though a Stationers' Register entry of 1637–8 names Fletcher alone.

There is perhaps no Elizabethan tragedy which holds the interest more than this, and this despite the fact that the situations always have an air of being manufactured. Take, for instance, the magnificent scene in which Melantius fools the King and so works upon Calianax as to mould him to what he pleases. Nothing could be cleverer than the management; and yet one would be justified in asking whether, in truth, Melantius would take such an enormous risk, and whether, if he did, he would, in the American phrase, "get away with it." This play shows perhaps at its best the remarkable gift of the authors for the conception and effective handling of devices that are essentially theatrical. Note the play with the swords in III 2—how, when Melantius wants to fight, Amintor does not, and, when Amintor becomes the aggressor, Melantius declines. And, immediately on top of that skilful and gripping scene between the brother and the lover of Evadne, we have the enormous surprise of Melantius' direct approach to his enemy, Calianax. One who does not know the play can hardly help telling himself that here the authors have said good-bye to probability—that the very last thing Melantius would have thought of doing was putting himself into the power of his vindictive adversary. One would be thoroughly justified in saying so; and, indeed, not to take such an exception would show the lack of critical faculty; and yet the critic has to confess that he has been fooled, and that the authors have brilliantly justified themselves.

There are manifestations of the authors' mentality to which modern

men and women are likely to take exception. Amintor's tacit acceptance of the dogma of "the right divine of kings to govern wrong" is apt to rob him of the sympathy of stern republicans; but there have been courtiers who held precisely his views, and there is no good reason why the authors should not have portrayed one. The attitude of Evadne in V 1 is also likely to be less satisfactory to the modern reader than it apparently was to her creators: her heroics might have been pardonable on the part of a raped woman, or even of a seduced girl; but Evadne was one who knew well what she was doing: she was a consenting party, urged on by her ambition and her lust. Again, there is more than a touch of the absurd in the bearing of Aspatia in the early part of the play. She is the love-lorn, jilted maiden *in excelsis;* but is it not going a little too far to make her regale the bride who has supplanted her with the doleful ditty beginning "Lay a garland on my hearse"? She may have been a very admirable person; but she was not an ideal member of a wedding party.

Some of the characterization is very fine—Melantius, Calianax, the Philaster-like Amintor, the impudently courageous Evadne (though her conversion is not very convincing), Diphilus. The last is but very lightly sketched; but how firmly! He is indeed of the noble Melantius' strain. When his elder brother tells him that, if he thought the younger had a base thought, he would rip it out, how nobly the young man answers!—

> You should not; I would first
> Mangle myself and find it;

and even finer is his refusal to take an oath to aid his brother in his unexplained project, on the ground that no oath is necessary. In that same passage too, note the powerfully dramatic line with which Melantius answers the announcement of his brother that the King and Evadne had laughed as if "their spleens would break":

> They must weep, Diphilus.

There are throughout many lines of bitter irony, of strong dramatic feeling, of the deepest pathos, and of sheer beauty, though there is a measure of unreality in the language in IV 1. Some of the finest passages are in III 1, though perhaps there is no single line more beautiful in its sadness than Amintor's cry in the final scene:

> Those have most power to hurt us that we love.

As no source is known, the striking plot may be the invention of the dramatists.

CHARACTERS

KING.
LYSIPPUS, *brother to the King.*
AMINTOR.
MELANTIUS, DIPHILUS } *brothers to Evadne.*
CALIANAX, *father to Aspatia.*
CLEON, STRATO } *Gentlemen.*
DIAGORAS, *a servant to Calianax.*

EVADNE, *wife to Amintor.*
ASPATIA, *troth-plight wife to Amintor.*
ANTIPHILA, OLYMPIAS } *waiting gentlewomen to Aspatia.*
DULA, *a lady attendant on Evadne.*
Lords, Ladies, Gentlemen, Servants, etc.

MASQUERS.

NIGHT, CYNTHIA, NEPTUNE, AEOLUS, *Sea Gods, Winds.*

PLACE: *The City of Rhodes.*
TIME: *Indefinite.*

ACT ONE

Scene I (B)

The King of Rhodes, *having made* Evadne, *the sister of his great general* Melantius, *his secret mistress, has married her to* Amintor, *a noble gentleman of his Court, whom he has persuaded to jilt* Aspatia, *the lady to whom he had been betrothed. The wedding has just taken place on the day of* Melantius' *return from the wars. Between the marriage ceremony and the festivities that are to follow,* Cleon, Strato, Lysippus, *and* Diphilus *are met in an apartment of the palace.*

Cle. The rest are making ready, sir.
Lys. So let them; there's time enough.
Diph. You are the brother to the King, my lord;
We'll take your word.
Lys. Strato, thou hast some skill in poetry;
What think'st thou of the masque? Will it be well?
Stra. As well as masques can be.
Lys. As masques can be!
Stra. Yes; they must commend their king, and speak in praise
Of the assembly, bless the bride and bridegroom
In person of some god; they're tied to rules
Of flattery.
Cle. See, good my lord, who is returned!

Enter Melantius.

Lys. Noble Melantius, the land by me
Welcomes thy virtues home to Rhodes;
Thou that with blood abroad buyest us our peace!
The breath of kings is like the breath of gods;
My brother wished thee here, and thou art here.
He will be too kind, and weary thee
With often welcomes; but the time doth give thee
A welcome above his or all the world's.
Mel. My lord, my thanks; but these scratched limbs of mine
Have spoke my love and truth unto my friends,
More than my tongue e'er could. My mind's the same
It ever was to you: where I find worth,
I love the keeper till he let it go,
And then I follow it.
Diph. Hail, worthy brother!
He that rejoices not at your return
In safety is mine enemy for ever.
Mel. I thank thee, Diphilus. But thou art faulty:
I sent for thee to exercise thine arms
With me at Patria; thou cam'st not, Diphilus;
'Twas ill.
Diph. My noble brother, my excuse
Is my king's strict command,—which you, my lord,
Can witness with me.
Lys. 'Tis most true, Melantius;
He might not come till the solemnities
Of this great match were past.
Diph. Have you heard of it?
Mel. Yes, and have given cause to those that here
Envy my deeds abroad to call me gamesome:
I have no other business here at Rhodes.
Lys. We have a masque to-night, and you must tread
A soldier's measure.

MEL. These soft and silken wars are not for me:
The music must be shrill and all confused
That stirs my blood; and then I dance with arms.
But is Amintor wed?
DIPH. This day.
MEL. All joys upon him! for he is my friend.
Wonder not that I call a man so young my friend:
His worth is great; valiant he is, and temperate;
And one that never thinks his life his own,
If his friend need it. When he was a boy,
As oft as I returned (as, without boast,
I brought home conquest), he would gaze upon me
And view me round, to find in what one limb
The virtue lay to do those things he heard;
Then would he wish to see my sword, and feel
The quickness of the edge, and in his hand
Weigh it. He oft would make me smile at this.
His youth did promise much, and his ripe years
Will see it all performed.—

ASPATIA, *whom* AMINTOR, *unknown to* MELANTIUS, *has jilted, is passing across the stage, when* MELANTIUS *hails her.*

Hail, maid and wife!
Thou fair Aspatia, may the holy knot
That thou hast tied to-day last till the hand
Of age undo't! May'st thou bring a race
Unto Amintor, that may fill the world
Successively with soldiers!
ASP. My hard fortunes
Deserve not scorn, for I was never proud
When they were good. [*Exit.*
MEL. How's this?
LYS. You are mistaken, sir; She is not married.
MEL. You said Amintor was.
DIPH. 'Tis true; but—
MEL. Pardon me; I did receive
Letters at Patria from my Amintor,
That he should marry her.
DIPH. And so it stood
In all opinion long; but your arrival
Made me imagine you had heard the change.
MEL. Who hath he taken then?
LYS. A lady, sir,
That bears the light about her and strikes dead
With flashes of her eye; the fair Evadne,
Your virtuous sister.
MEL. Peace of heart betwixt them! But this is strange.
LYS. The King, my brother, did it To honor you; and these solemnities
Are at his charge.
MEL. 'Tis royal, like himself. But I am sad
My speech bears so unfortunate a sound
To beautiful Aspatia. There is rage
Hid in her father's breast, Calianax,
Bent long against me; and he should not think,
If I could call it back, that I would take
So base revenges as to scorn the state
Of his neglected daughter. Holds he still
His greatness with the King?
LYS. Yes. But this lady
Walks discontented, with her watery eyes
Bent on the earth. The unfrequented woods
Are her delight; where, when she sees a bank
Stuck full of flowers, she with a sigh will tell
Her servants what a pretty place it were
To bury lovers in, and make her maids
Pluck 'em, and strow her over like a corse.
She carries with her an infectious grief,
That strikes all her beholders: she will sing
The mournful'st things that ever ear hath heard,
And sigh, and sing again; and, when the rest
Of our young ladies, in their wanton blood,

Tell mirthful tales in course,[1] that fill the room
With laughter, she will, with so sad a look,
Bring forth a story of the silent death
Of some forsaken virgin, which her grief
Will put in such a phrase that, ere she end,
She'll send them weeping one by one away.
MEL. She has a brother under my command,
Like her; a face as womanish as hers;
But with a spirit that hath much outgrown
The number of his years.

Enter AMINTOR.

CLE. My lord the bridegroom!
MEL. I might run fiercely, not more hastily,
Upon my foe. I love thee well, Amintor;
My mouth is much too narrow for my heart;
I joy to look upon those eyes of thine:
Thou art my friend; but my disordered speech
Cuts off my love.
AMIN. Thou art Melantius;
All love is spoke in that.—A sacrifice,
To thank the gods Melantius is returned
In safety! Victory sits on his sword,
As she was wont.—May she build there and dwell;
And may thy armor be, as it hath been,
Only thy valor and thine innocence!
What endless treasures would our enemies give,
That I might hold thee still thus!
MEL. I am poor
In words; but credit me, young man, thy mother
Could do no more but weep for joy to see thee
After long absence. All the wounds I have
Fetched not so much away, nor all the cries
Of widowed mothers. But this is peace,
And that was war.

AMIN. Pardon, thou holy god
Of marriage-bed, and frown not I am forced,
In answer of such noble tears as those,
To weep upon my wedding-day!
MEL. I fear thou art grown too fickle; for I hear
A lady mourns for thee (men say, to death),
Forsaken of thee, on what terms[2] I know not.
AMIN. She had my promise; but the King forbade it,
And made me make this worthy change, thy sister,
Accompanied with graces above her,
With whom I long to lose my lusty youth
And grow old in her arms.
MEL. Be prosperous!

Enter MESSENGER.

MESS. My lord, the masquers rage for you.
LYS. We are gone.—
Cleon, Strato, Diphilus!
AMIN. We'll all attend you.—[*Exeunt* LYSIPPUS, CLEON, STRATO, DIPHILUS, *and* MESSENGER.
We shall trouble you
With our solemnities.
MEL. Not so, Amintor;
But, if you laugh at my rude carriäge
In peace, I'll do as much for you in war,
When you come thither. Yet I have a mistress
To bring to your delights; rough though I am,
I have a mistress, and she has a heart,
She says; but, trust me, it is stone, no better;
There is no place that I can challenge in't.
But you stand still, and here my way lies. [*Exit.*

SCENE II (B)

A hall in the palace on the evening of the same day. Part of it has been made to resemble rocks, in preparation for the

[1] in turn.
[2] in what circumstances.

masque to be given. CALIANAX *has been entrusted with the task of admitting guests to the gallery. We are to imagine a great crowd waiting outside the main door ("the outer door"). There is alongside it a second door leading to the gallery ("the gallery door"); and a third,* [10 *("the inner door"), by which the* KING *will enter. The gallery is visible above, with numbers of Ladies in it.* CALIANAX *is being assisted by* DIAGORAS, *who, after the manner of assistants, has to do all the work.*

CAL. Diagoras, look to the doors better, for shame! You let in all the world, and anon the King will rail at me. Why, very well said.[3] By Jove, the King [20 will have the show i' th' court!

DIAG. Why do you swear so, my lord? You know he'll have it here.

CAL. By this light, if he be wise, he will not.

DIAG. And, if he will not be wise, you are forsworn.

CAL. One may wear his heart out with swearing, and get thanks on no side. I'll be gone; look to't who will. [30

DIAG. My lord, I shall never keep them out. Pray, stay; your looks will terrify them.

CAL. My looks terrify them, you coxcombly ass, you! I'll be judged by all the company whether thou hast not a worse face than I.

DIAG. I mean, because they know you and your office. [39

CAL. Office! I would I could put it off! I am sure I sweat quite through my office. I might have made room at my daughter's wedding;—they ha' near killed her among them; and now I must do service for him that hath forsaken her. Serve that will! [*Exit by the inner door.*

DIAG. He's so humorous[4] since his daughter was forsaken! [*Knock within.*] Hark, hark! there, there! so, so! codes, codes![5] What now? [50

MEL., *within.* Open the door.

DIAG. Who's there?

[3] done.
[4] moody.
[5] a corruption of "Gods."

MEL., *within.* Melantius.

DIAG. I hope your lordship brings no troop with you; for, if you do, I must return them. [*Opens the outer door.*

Enter MELANTIUS *and a Lady.*

MEL. None but this lady, sir.

DIAG. The ladies are all placed above, save those that come in the King's troop; the best of Rhodes sit there; and there's room. [62

MEL. I thank you, sir.—When I have seen you placed, madam, I must attend the King; but, the masque done, I'll wait on you again.

DIAG., *opening the gallery door without letting go of the outer door.* Stand back there!—Room for my Lord Melantius! [*Exeunt* MELANTIUS *and Lady.* DIAGORAS *shuts the gallery door after them, and directs his attention again to the outer* [72 *door.*]—Pray, bear back: this is no place for such youths and their trulls. Let the doors shut again.—No?—do your heads itch? I'll scratch them for you. [*After a hard struggle, succeeds in closing the door.*]—So, now thrust and hang. [*Knocking within.*]—Again! who is't now?—I cannot blame my Lord Calianax for [80 going away; would he were here! He would run raging among them, and break a dozen wiser heads than his own in the twinkling of an eye.—What's the news now?

ONE, *within.* I pray you, can you help me to the speech of the master-cook?

[MELANTIUS *has meanwhile entered the gallery, seated his Lady in a very prominent position, and departed.*

Re-enter CALIANAX. [91

DIAG. If I open the door, I'll cook some of your calves-heads. Peace, rogues! [*Knocking within.*]—Again! who is't?

MEL., *within.* Melantius.

CAL. Let him not in.

DIAG. O, my lord, I must. [*Opening the gallery door.*]—Make room there for my lord.—Is your lady placed?

Re-enter MELANTIUS. [100

MEL. Yes, sir.

I thank you.—My Lord Calianax, well met.
Your causeless hate to me I hope is buried.
CAL. Yes, I do service for your sister here,
That brings my own poor child to timeless death.
She loves your friend Amintor, such another [111
False-hearted lord as you.
MEL. You do me wrong,
A most unmanly one, and I am slow
In taking vengeance; but be well advised.
CAL. It may be so.—Who placed the lady there
So near the presence of the King?
MEL. I did.
CAL. My lord, she must not sit there.
MEL. Why? [121
CAL. The place is kept for women of more worth.
MEL. More worth than she! It misbecomes your age
And place to be thus womanish: forbear!
What you have spoke I am content to think
The palsy shook your tongue to.
CAL. Why, 'tis well, [130
If I stand here to place men's wenches.
MEL. I
Shall quite forget this place, thy age, my safety,
And, through all, cut that poor sickly week
Thou hast to live away from thee.
CAL. Nay, I know you can fight for your whore.
MEL. Bate me the King, and, be he flesh and blood, [141
'A lies that says it! Thy mother at fifteen
Was black and sinful to her.
DIAG. Good my lord—
MEL. Some god pluck threescore years from that fond[6] man,
That I may kill him, and not stain mine honor! [149

Enter AMINTOR *by the inner door.*

It is the curse of soldiers that in peace
They shall be braved by such ignoble men
As, if the land were troubled, would with tears
And knees beg succor from 'em. Would that blood,
That sea of blood, that I have lost in fight [159
Were running in thy veins, that it might make thee
Apt to say less, or able to maintain,
Should'st thou say more! This Rhodes, I see, is nought
But a place privileged to do men wrong.
CAL. Ay, you may say your pleasure.
AMIN. What vild injury
Has stirred my worthy friend, who is as slow [169
To fight with words as he is quick of hand?
MEL. That heap of age, which I should reverence
If it were temperate; but testy years
Are most contemptible.
AMIN. Good sir, forbear.
CAL. There is just such another as yourself.
AMIN. He will wrong you, or me, or any man, [180
And talk as if he had no life to lose,
Since this our match. The King is coming in;
I would not for more wealth than I enjoy
He should perceive you raging. He did hear
You were at difference now, which hastened him. [*Hautboys play within.*
CAL. Make room there! [189

Enter by the inner door the KING, EVADNE, ASPATIA, *Lords, and Ladies.*

KING. Melantius, thou art welcome, and my love
Is with thee still; but this is not a place
To brabble in.—Calianax, join hands.
CAL. He shall not have mine hand.
KING. This is no time
To force you to't. I do love you both.—
Calianax, you look well to your office.—
And you, Melantius, are welcome home.—
[*The* KING *and* EVADNE *sit.* [201

[6] foolish.

Begin the masque.
MEL. Sister, I joy to see you and your choice;
You looked with my eyes when you took that man.
Be happy in him! [*Recorders*[7] *play.*
EVAD. O, my dearest brother,
Your presence is more joyful than this day
Can be unto me.

The Masque begins. NIGHT *rises in mists.*

NIGHT. Our reign is come; for in the quenching sea
The sun is drowned, and with him fell the Day.
Bright Cynthia, hear my voice! I am the Night,
For whom thou bear'st about thy borrowed light.
Appear! no longer thy pale visage shroud,
But strike thy silver horns quite through a cloud,
And send a beam upon my swarthy face,
By which I may discover all the place
And persons, and how many longing eyes
Are come to wait on our solemnities.

Enter CYNTHIA *by the inner door.*

How dull and black am I! I could not find
This beauty without thee, I am so blind:
Methinks they show like to those eastern streaks
That warn us hence before the morning breaks.
Back, my pale servant! for these eyes know how
To shoot far more and quicker rays than thou.
CYNTH. Great queen, they be a troop for whom alone
One of my clearest moons I have put on;
A troop, that looks as if thyself and I
Had plucked our reins in and our whips laid by,
To gaze upon these mortals, that appear
Brighter than we.
NIGHT. Then let us keep 'em here,
And never more our chariots drive away,
But hold our places and outshine the Day.
CYNTH. Great queen of shadows, you are pleased to speak
Of more than may be done. We may not break
The gods' decrees; but, when our time is come,
Must drive away, and give the Day our room.
Yet, whilst our reign lasts, let us stretch our power
To give our servants one contented hour,
With such unwonted solemn grace and state
As may forever after force them hate
Our brother's glorious beams, and wish the Night
Crowned with a thousand stars and our cold light:
For almost all the world their service bend
To Phoebus, and in vain my light I lend,
Gazed on unto my setting from my rise
Almost of none but of unquiet eyes.
NIGHT. Then shine at full, fair queen, and by thy power
Produce a birth, to crown this happy hour,
Of nymphs and shepherds; let their songs discover,
Easy and sweet, who is a happy lover;
Or, if thou woot, then call thine own Endymion
From the sweet flowery bed he lies upon,
On Latmus' top, thy pale beams drawn away,
And of this long night let him make thy day.
CYNTH. Thou dream'st, dark queen; that fair boy was not mine,
Nor went I down to kiss him. Ease and wine
Have bred these bold tales: poets, when they rage,
Turn gods to men, and make an hour an age.
But I will give a greater state and glory,
And raise to time a nobler memory
Of what these lovers are.—Rise, rise, I say,

[7] Flageolets.

Thou power of deeps, thy surges laid away,
Neptune, great king of waters, and by me
Be proud to be commanded!

NEPTUNE *rises.*

NEPT. Cynthia, see,
Thy word hath fetched me hither: let me know
Why I ascend.
CYNTH. Doth this majestic show
Give thee no knowledge yet? [310
NEPT. Yes, now I see
Something intended, Cynthia, worthy thee.
Go on; I'll be a helper.
CYNTH. Hie thee, then,
And charge the Wind fly from his rocky den,
Let loose his subjects; only Boreas,
Too foul for our intentions as he was,
Still keep him fast chained: we must [320
have none here
But vernal blasts and gentle winds appear,
Such as blow flowers and through the glad boughs sing
Many soft welcomes to the lusty spring;
These are our music. Next, thy watery race
Bring on in couples (we are pleased to grace [330
This noble night), each in their richest things
Your own deeps or the broken vessel brings.
Be prodigal, and I shall be as kind
And shine at full upon you.
NEPT. Oh, the Wind!
Commanding Aeolus!

Enter AEOLUS *out of a rock.*

AEOL. Great Neptune! [340
NEPT. Hc.
AEOL. What is thy will?
NEPT. We do command thee free
Favonius and thy milder winds, to wait
Upon our Cynthia; but tie Boreas strait:
He's too rebellious.
AEOL. I shall do it.
NEPT. Do. [*Exit* AEOLUS.

AEOL., *within.* Great master of the flood and all below, [350
Thy full command has taken.—Oh, the Main!
Neptune!
NEPT. Here.

Re-enter AEOLUS, *followed by* FAVONIUS *and other Winds.*

AEOL. Boreas has broke his chain,
And, struggling with the rest, has got away.
NEPT. Let him alone, I'll take him up at sea; [361
I will not long be thence. Go once again,
And call out of the bottoms of the main
Blue Proteus and the rest; charge them put on
Their greatest pearls, and the most sparkling stone
The beaten rock breeds; tell this night is done
By me a solemn honor to the Moon: [370
Fly, like a full sail.
AEOL. I am gone. [*Exit.*
CYNTH. Dark Night,
Strike a full silence, do a thorough right
To this great chorus, that our music may
Touch high as Heaven, and make the east break day
At midnight. [*Music.*

FIRST SONG

during which PROTEUS *and other Sea-deities enter from below.* [381

Cynthia, to thy power and thee
We obey.
Joy to this great company!
And no day
Come to steal this night away,
Till the rites of love are ended,
And the lusty bridegroom say,
"Welcome, light, of all befriended!"

Pace out, you watery powers below; [390
Let your feet,
Like the galleys when they row,
Even beat.
Let your unknown measures, set
To the still winds, tell to all
That gods are come, immortal, great,
To honor this great nuptiäl.

[*The Masquers dance a measure*

SECOND SONG.

Hold back thy hours, dark Night, till we have done;
The day will come too soon:
Young maids will curse thee, if thou steal'st away,
And leav'st their losses open to the day:
Stay, stay, and hide
The blushes of the bride.

Stay, gentle Night, and with thy darkness cover
The kisses of her lover;
Stay, and confound her tears and her shrill cryings,
Her weak denials, vows, and often-dyings;
Stay, and hide all;
But help not, though she call.

NEPT. Great queen of us and Heaven, hear what I bring
To make this hour a full one.
CYNTH. Speak, sea's king.
NEPT. The tunes my Amphitrite joys to have,
When she will dance upon the rising wave,
And court me as she sails. My Tritons, play
Music to lay a storm! I'll lead the way.
[*A Measure, led by* NEPTUNE.

THIRD SONG.

To bed, to bed! Come, Hymen, lead the bride,
And lay her by her husband's side;
Bring in the virgins every one,
That grieve to lie alone,
That they may kiss while they may say a maid;
To-morrow 'twill be other kissed and said.
Hesperus, be long a-shining,
Whilst these lovers are a-twining.

AEOL., *within*. Ho, Neptune!
NEPT. Aeolus!

Re-enter AEOLUS.

AEOL. The sea goes high,
Boreas hath raised a storm: go and apply
Thy trident; else, I prophesy, ere day
Many a tall ship will be cast away.
Descend with all the gods and all their power,
To strike a calm.

CYNTH. We thank you for this hour:
My favor to you all. To gratulate
So great a service, done at my desire,
Ye shall have many floods, fuller and higher
Than you have wished for; and no ebb shall dare
To let the Day see where your dwellings are.
Now back unto your governments in haste,
Lest your proud charge should swell above the waste,
And win upon the island.
NEPT. We obey.
[NEPTUNE *and the Sea-Gods descend.* *Exeunt* FAVONIUS *and other Winds into the rocks.*
CYNTH. Hold up thy head, dead Night; see'st thou not Day?
The east begins to lighten. I must down,
And give my brother place.
NIGHT. Oh, I could frown
To see the Day, the Day that flings his light
Upon my kingdom and contemns old Night!
Let him go on and flame! I hope to see
Another wild-fire in his axle-tree,
And all fall drenched. But I forget.—Speak, queen:
The Day grows on; I must no more be seen.
CYNTH. Heave up thy drowsy head again and see
A greater light, a greater majesty,
Between our set[8] and us! Whip up thy team:
The Day breaks here, and yon same flashing stream
Shot from the south. Say, which way wilt thou go?[9]
NIGHT. I'll vanish into mists.
CYNTH. I into Day.
[NIGHT *sinks in a mist, and* CYNTHIA *departs by the inner door. The masque ends.*

[8] setting. B, seat.
[9] Should, surely, read "Which way wilt thou go, say?" for the sake of the rhyme.

KING. Take lights there!—Ladies, get the bride to bed.—
We will not see you laid.—Good night, Amintor;
We'll ease you of that tedious ceremony.
Were it my case, I should think time run slow.
If thou be'st noble, youth, get me a boy,
That may defend my kingdoms from my foes.
AMIN. All happiness to you!
KING. Good night, Melantius.
[*Exit, the Lords in attendance following.*

ACT TWO

SCENE I (B)

In the anteroom to EVADNE'S *bedchamber, a few minutes later, the bride is being waited on by* ASPATIA, DULA, *and other Ladies.*

DULA. Madam, shall we undress you for this fight?
The wars are nak'd that you must make to-night.
EVAD. You are very merry, Dula.
DULA. I should be
Far merrier, madam, if it were with me
As it is with you.
EVAD. How's that?
DULA. That I might go
To bed with him wi' th' credit that you do.
EVAD. Why, how now, wench?
DULA. Come, ladies, will you help?
EVAD. I am soon undone.
DULA. And as soon done:
Good store of clothes will trouble you at both.
EVAD. Art thou drunk, Dula?
DULA. Why, here's none but we.
EVAD. Thou think'st belike there is no modesty
When we're alone.
DULA. Ay, by my troth, you hit my thoughts aright.
EVAD. You prick me, lady.
1 LADY. 'Tis against my will.
DULA. Anon you must endure more and lie still;
You're best to practise.
EVAD. Sure, this wench is mad.
DULA. No, faith, this is a trick that I have had
Since I was fourteen.
EVAD. 'Tis high time to leave it.
DULA. Nay, now I'll keep it till the trick leave me.
A dozen wanton words put in your head
Will make you livelier in your husband's bed.
EVAD. Nay, faith, then take it.[1]
DULA. Take it, madam! Where?
We all, I hope, will take it that are here.
EVAD. Nay, then I'll give you o'er.
DULA. So will I make
The ablest man in Rhodes, or his heart, ache.
EVAD. Wilt take my place to-night?
DULA. I'll hold your cards
Against any two I know.
EVAD. What wilt thou do?
DULA. Madam, we'll do't, and make 'em leave play too.
EVAD. Aspatia, take her part.
DULA. I will refuse it:
She will pluck down a side;[2] she does not use it.
EVAD. Why, do, I prithee.
DULA. You will find the play
Quickly, because your head lies well that way.
EVAD. I thank thee, Dula. Would thou couldst instil
Some of thy mirth into Aspatia!
Nothing but sad thoughts in her breast do dwell:
Methinks a mean betwixt you would do well.
DULA. She is in love: hang me, if I were so,
But I could run my country. I love too
To do those things that people in love do.
ASP. It were a timeless[3] smile should prove my cheek.
It were a fitter hour for me to laugh,
When at the altar the religious priest
Were pacifying the offended powers
With sacrifice, than now. This should have been

[1] *i.e.*, the trick. (Thorndike.)
[2] lose the game. [3] untimely.

My right; and all your hands have been employed
In giving me a spotless offering
To young Amintor's bed, as we are now
For you. Pardon, Evadne: would my worth [90
Were great as yours, or that the King, or he,
Or both, thought so! Perhaps he found me worthless:
But, till he did so, in these ears of mine,
These credulous ears, he poured the sweetest words
That art or love could frame. If he were false, [99
Pardon it, Heaven! and, if I did want
Virtue, you safely may forgive that too;
For I have lost none that I had from you.

EVAD. Nay, leave this sad talk, madam.

ASP. Would I could!
Then should I leave the cause.

EVAD. See, if you have not spoiled all Dula's mirth!

ASP. Thou think'st thy heart hard; but, if thou be'st caught, [110
Remember me; thou shalt perceive a fire
Shot suddenly into thee.

DULA. That's not so good;
Let 'em shoot anything but fire, I fear 'em not.

ASP. Well, wench, thou may'st be taken.

EVAD. Ladies, good-night; I'll do the rest myself. [120

DULA. Nay, let your lord do some.

ASP., *singing*.

Lay a garland on my hearse
Of the dismal yew—

EVAD. That's one of your sad songs, madam.

ASP. Believe me, 'tis a very pretty one.

EVAD. How is it, madam?

ASP., *singing*.

Lay a garland on my hearse [130
Of the dismal yew;
Maidens, willow-branches bear;
Say I diëd true.
My love was false; but I was firm
From my hour of birth:
Upon my buried body lie
Lightly, gentle earth!

EVAD. Fie on't, madam! The words are so strange, they are able to make one dream of hobgoblins.—"I could never have the power," sing that, Dula. [141

DULA, *singing*.

I could never have the power
To love one above an hour,
But my heart would prompt mine eye
On some other man to fly.
Venus, fix mine eyës fast,
Or, if not, give me all that I shall see at last!

EVAD. So, leave me now. [150

DULA. Nay, we must see you laid.

ASP. Madam, good night. May all the marriage-joys
That longing maids imagine in their beds
Prove so unto you! May no discontent
Grow 'twixt your love and you! but, if there do,
Inquire of me, and I will guide your moan, [160
Teach you an artificial way to grieve,
To keep your sorrow waking. Love your lord
No worse than I; but, if you love so well,
Alas, you may displease him! so did I.
This is the last time you shall look on me.—
Ladies, farewell. As soon as I am dead,
Come all and watch one night about my hearse; [170
Bring each a mournful story and a tear,
To offer at it when I go to earth;
With flattering ivy clasp my coffin round;
Write on my brow my fortune; let my bier
Be borne by virgins, that shall sing by course[4]
The truth of maids and perjuries of men.

EVAD. Alas, I pity thee. [179

ALL. Madam, good night.

[*Exit* EVADNE *into the bedroom*.

1 LADY. Come, we'll let in the bridegroom.

[4] by turn.

DULA, *opening the outer door.* Where's my lord?

Enter AMINTOR.

1 LADY. Here, take this light.
DULA. You'll find her in the dark.
1 LADY. Your lady's scarce a-bed yet; you must help her.
ASP. Go, and be happy in your lady's love.
May all the wrongs that you have done to me
Be utterly forgotten in my death!
I'll trouble you no more; yet I will take
A parting kiss, and will not be denied.
[*Kisses* AMINTOR.
You'll come, my lord, and see the virgins weep
When I am laid in earth, though you yourself
Can know no pity. Thus I wind myself
Into this willow-garland, and am prouder
That I was once your love, though now refused,
Than to have had another true to me.
So with my prayers I leave you, and must try
Some yet unpractised way to grieve and die. [*Exit.*
DULA. Come, ladies, will you go?
ALL. Good night, my lord.
AMIN. Much happiness unto you all!—
[*Exeunt* DULA *and Ladies.*
I did that lady wrong. Methinks, I feel
A grief shoot suddenly through all my veins;
Mine eyes rain: this is strange at such a time.
It was the King first moved me to't; but he
Has not my will in keeping. Why do I
Perplex myself thus? Something whispers me,
Go not to bed. My guilt is not so great
As mine own conscièncе, too sensible,
Would make me think; I only brake a promise,
And 'twas the King that forced me. Timorous flesh,
Why shak'st thou so? Away, my idle fears!

Re-enter EVADNE.

<Yonder she is, the lustre of whose eye
Can blot away the sad remembrance
Of all these things.> Oh, my Evadne, spare
That tender body; let it not take cold!
The vapors of the night will not fall here.
To bed, my love: Hymen will punish us
For being slack performers of his rites.
Camest thou to call me?
EVAD. No.
AMIN. Come, come, my love,
And let us lose ourselves to one another.
Why art thou up so long?
EVAD. I am not well.
AMIN. To bed then; let me wind thee in these arms
Till I have banished sickness.
EVAD. Good my lord,
I cannot sleep.
AMIN. Evadne, we will watch;
I mean no sleeping.
EVAD. I'll not go to bed.
AMIN. I prithee, do.
EVAD. I will not for the world.
AMIN. Why, my dear love?
EVAD. Why! I have sworn I will not.
AMIN. Sworn!
EVAD. Ay.
AMIN. How? Sworn, Evadne!
EVAD. Yes, sworn, Amintor; and will swear again,
If you will wish to hear me.
AMIN. To whom have you sworn this?
EVAD. If I should name him, the matter were not great.
AMIN. Come, this is but the coyness of a bride.
EVAD., *with intense bitterness.* The coyness of a bride!
AMIN. How prettily
That frown becomes thee!
EVAD. Do you like it so?
AMIN. Thou canst not dress thy face in such a look
But I shall like it.
EVAD. What look likes[5] you best?
AMIN. Why do you ask?
EVAD. That I may show you one less pleasing to you.

[5] pleases.

AMIN. How's that?
EVAD. That I may show you one less pleasing to you.
AMIN. I prithee, put thy jests in milder looks;
It shows as thou wert angry.
EVAD. So perhaps [290
I am indeed.
AMIN. Why, who has done thee wrong?
Name me the man, and by thyself I swear,
Thy yet unconquered self, I will revenge thee!
EVAD. Now I shall try thy truth. If thou dost love me,
Thou weigh'st not anything compared with me: [301
Life, honor, joys eternal, all delights
This world can yield, or hopeful people feign,
Or in the life to come, are light as air
To a true lover when his lady frowns,
And bids him, "Do this." Wilt thou kill this man?
Swear, my Amintor, and I'll kiss the sin
Off from thy lips. [310
AMIN. I wo' not swear, sweet love,
Till I do know the cause.
EVAD. I would thou wouldst.
Why, it is thou that wrong'st me; I hate thee;
Thou should'st have killed thyself.
AMIN. If I should know that, I should quickly kill
The man you hated. [319
EVAD. Know it, then, and do't.
AMIN. Oh, no! what look soe'er thou shalt put on,
To try my faith, I shall not think thee false;
I cannot find one blemish in thy face,
Where falsehood should abide. Leave, and to bed.
If you have sworn to any of the virgins
That were your old companions to preserve [330
Your maidenhead a night, it may be done
Without this means.
EVAD., *cynically*. A maidenhead, Amintor,
At my years!
AMIN. <Sure she raves; this cannot be
Her natural temper.> Shall I call thy maids?
Either thy healthful sleep hath left thee long, [341
Or else some fever rages in thy blood.
EVAD. Neither, Amintor: think you I am mad,
Because I speak the truth?
AMIN. Is this the truth?
Will you not lie with me to-night?
EVAD. To-night!
You talk as if you thought I would hereafter. [350
AMIN. Hereafter! yes, I do.
EVAD. You are deceived.
Put off amazement, and with patience mark
What I shall utter, for the oracle
Knows nothing truer. 'Tis not for a night
Or two that I forbear thy bed, but ever.
AMIN. I dream. Awake, Amintor!
EVAD. You hear right: [360
I sooner will find out the beds of snakes,
And with my youthful blood warm their cold flesh,
Letting them curl themselves about my limbs,
Than sleep one night with thee. This is not feigned,
Nor sounds it like the coyness of a bride.
AMIN. Is flesh so earthly to endure all this? [370
Are these the joys of marriage? Hymen, keep
This story, that will make succeeding youth
Neglect thy ceremonies, from all ears;
Let it not rise up, for thy shame and mine
To after-ages: we will scorn thy laws,
If thou no better bless them. Touch the heart [380
Of her that thou hast sent me, or the world
Shall know there's not an altar that will smoke
In praise of thee; we will adopt us sons;

Then virtue shall inherit, and not blood.
If we do lust, we'll take the next we meet,
Serving ourselves as other creatures do;
And never take note of the female more,
Nor of her issue. <I do rage in vain;
She can but jest.> Oh, pardon me, my love!
So dear the thoughts are that I hold of thee,
That I must break forth. Satisfy my fear;
It is a pain, beyond the hand of death,
To be in doubt. Confirm it with an oath,
If this be true.
EVAD. Do you invent the form;
Let there be in it all the binding words
Devils and conjurers can put together,
And I will take it. I have sworn before,
And here by all things holy do again,
Never to be acquainted with thy bed!
Is your doubt over now?
AMIN. I know too much; would I had doubted still!
Was ever such a marriage-night as this?
You powers above, if you did ever mean
Man should be used thus, you have thought a way
How he may bear himself and save his honor:
Instruct me in it; for to my dull eyes
There is no mean, no moderate course to run;
I must live scorned or be a murderer.
Is there a third? Why is this night so calm?
Why does not Heaven speak in thunder to us,
And drown her voice?
EVAD. This rage will do no good.
AMIN. Evadne, hear me. Thou hast ta'en an oath,
But such a rash one that to keep it were
Worse than to swear it. Call it back to thee;
Such vows as that never ascend to Heaven;
A tear or two will wash it quite away.
Have mercy on my youth, my hopeful youth,
If thou be pitiful! for, without boast,
This land was proud of me. What lady was there,
That men called fair and virtuous in this isle,
That would have shunned my love? It is in thee
To make me hold this worth. Oh, we vain men,
That trust out all our reputatiön
To rest upon the weak and yielding hand
Of feeble woman! But thou art not stone;
Thy flesh is soft, and in thine eyes doth dwell
The spirit of love; thy heart cannot be hard.
Come, lead me from the bottom of despair
To all the joys thou hast; I know thou wilt;
And make me careful lest the sudden change
O'ercome my spirits.
EVAD. When I call back this oath,
The pains of hell environ me!
AMIN. I sleep, and am too temperate. Come to bed!
Or by those hairs, which, if thou hadst a soul
Like to thy locks, were threads for kings to wear
About their arms—
EVAD. Why, so perhaps they are.
AMIN. I'll drag thee to my bed, and make thy tongue
Undo this wicked oath, or on thy flesh
I'll print a thousand wounds to let out life.
EVAD. I fear thee not: do what thou darest to me!
Every ill-sounding word or threatening look
Thou shewest to me will be revenged at full.
AMIN. It will not sure, Evadne?
EVAD. Do not you hazard that.
AMIN. Ha' ye your champions?
EVAD. Alas, Amintor, think'st thou I forbear
To sleep with thee, because I have put on

A maiden's strictness? Look upon these cheeks,
And thou shalt find the hot and rising blood
Unapt for such a vow. No; in this heart
There dwells as much desire and as much will
To put that wish'd act in practice as ever yet
Was known to woman; and they have been shown
Both. But it was the folly of thy youth
To think this beauty, to what hand[6] so-e'er
It shall be called, shall stoop to any second.
I do enjoy the best, and in that height
Have sworn to stand or die. You guess the man.
AMIN. No; let me know the man that wrongs me so,
That I may cut his body into motes,
And scatter it before the northern wind.
EVAD. You dare not strike him.
AMIN. Do not wrong me so:
Yes, if his body were a poisonous plant
That it were death to touch, I have a soul
Will throw me on him.
EVAD. Why, 'tis the King.
AMIN. The King!
EVAD. What will you do now?
AMIN. 'Tis not the King!
EVAD. What did he make this match for, dull Amintor?
AMIN. Oh, thou hast named a word, that wipes away
All thoughts revengeful! In that sacred name,
"The King," there lies a terror. What frail man
Dares lift his hand against it? Let the gods
Speak to him when they please: till when, let us
Suffer and wait.
EVAD. Why should you fill yourself so full of heat,
And haste so to my bed? I am no virgin.

[6] B. land.

AMIN. What devil put it in thy fancy, then,
To marry me?
EVAD. Alas, I must have one
To father children, and to bear the name
Of husband to me, that my sin may be
More honorable!
AMIN. What strange thing am I!
EVAD. A miserable one; one that myself
Am sorry for.
AMIN. Why, show it then in this:
If thou hast pity, though thy love be none,
Kill me; and all true lovers, that shall live
In after-ages crossed in their desires,
Shall bless thy memory, and call thee good,
Because such mercy in thy heart was found,
To rid[7] a lingering wretch.
EVAD. I must have one
To fill thy room again, if thou wert dead;
Else, by this night, I would! I pity thee.
AMIN. These strange and sudden injuries have fallen
So thick upon me that I lose all sense
Of what they are. Methinks I am not wronged;
Nor is it aught, if from the censuring world
I can but hide it. Reputatiön,
Thou art a word, no more!—But thou hast shown
An impudence so high that to the world
I fear thou wilt betray or shame thyself.
EVAD. To cover shame I took thee; never fear
That I would blaze[8] myself.
AMIN. Nor let the King
Know I conceive he wrongs me; then mine honor
Will thrust me into action that my flesh
Could bear with patience. And it is some ease
To me in these extremes that I knew this
Before I touched thee; else, had all the sins

[7] despatch. [8] proclaim.

Of mankind stood betwixt me and the King,
I had gone through 'em to his heart and thine.
I have lost[9] one desire: 'tis not his crown
Shall buy me to thy bed, now I resolve[10]
He has dishonored thee: Give me thy hand;
Be careful of thy credit, and sin close;
'Tis all I wish. Upon thy chamber-floor
I'll rest to-night, that morning visitors
May think we did as married people use;
And prithee, smile upon me when they come,
And seem to toy, as if thou hadst been pleased
With what we did.
EVAD. Fear not; I will do this.
AMIN. Come, let us practise; and, as wantonly
As ever loving[11] bride and bridegroom met,
Let's laugh and enter here.
EVAD. I am content.
AMIN. Down, all the swellings of my troubled heart!
When we walk thus entwined, let all eyes see
If ever lovers better did agree. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II (F)

In a room in her home, ASPATIA *holds forth to her two waiting gentlewomen upon the miseries of unrequited love.*

ASP. Away, you are not sad! force it no further.
Good gods, how well you look! Such a full color
Young bashful brides put on: sure, you are new married!
ANT. Yes, madam, to your grief.
ASP. Alas, poor wenches!
Go, learn to love first; learn to lose yourselves;
Learn to be flattered, and believe and bless
The double tongue that did it; make a faith
Out of the miracles of ancient lovers,
Such as spake truth and died in't; and, like me,
Believe all faithful, and be miserable.
Did you ne'er love yet, wenches?—Speak, Olympias:
Thou hast an easy temper, fit for stamp.
OLYM. Never.
ASP. Nor you, Antiphila?
ANT. Nor I.
ASP. Then, my good girls, be more than women, wise;
At least be more than I was; and be sure
You credit any thing the light gives life to,
Before a man. Rather believe the sea
Weeps for the ruined merchant, when he roars;
Rather, the wind courts but the pregnant sails,
When the strong cordage cracks; rather, the sun
Comes but to kiss the fruit in wealthy autumn,
When all falls blasted. If you needs must love
(Forced by ill fate), take to your maiden-bosoms
Two dead-cold aspics, and of them make lovers.
They cannot flatter nor forswear; one kiss
Makes a long peace for all. But man—
Oh, that beast, man! Come, let's be sad, my girls:—
That down-cast of thine eye, Olympias,
Shows a fine sorrow.—Mark, Antiphila;
Just such another was the nymph Oenone,
When Paris brought home Helen.—Now, a tear;
And then thou art a piece expressing fully
The Carthage queen, when from a cold sea-rock,
Full with her sorrow, she tied fast her eyes
To the fair Trojan ships; and, having lost them,
Just as thine eyes do, down stole a tear.—Antiphila,

[9] Q1 has "left," referring to what is said four lines further on.
[10] realize.
[11] Q1 has "longing," which may be correct.

What would this wench do, if she were Aspatia?
Here she would stand, till some more [70
pitying god
Turned her to marble!—'Tis enough, my wench!
Show me the piece of needlework you wrought.
ANT. Of Ariadne, madam?
ASP. Yes, that piece.—
This should be Theseus; h'as a cozening face.—
You meant him for a man? [80
ANT. He was so, madam.
ASP. Why, then, 'tis well enough.—Never look back;
You have a full wind and a false heart, Theseus.—
Does not the story say his keel was split,
Or his masts spent, or some kind rock or other
Met with his vessel?
ANT. Not as I remember. [90
ASP. It should ha' been so. Could the gods know this,
And not, of all their number, raise a storm?
But they are all as evil. This false smile
Was well expressed; just such another caught me.—
[*To* THESEUS.] You shall not go so.—
Antiphila, in this place work a quicksand, [100
And over it a shallow, smiling water,
And his ship ploughing it; and then a Fear:
Do that Fear to the life, wench.
ANT. 'Twill wrong the story.
ASP. 'Twill make the story, wronged by wanton poets,
Live long and be believed. But where's the lady?
ANT. There, madam. [110
ASP. Fie, you have missed it here, Antiphila;
You are much mistaken, wench.
These colors are not dull and pale enough
To show a soul so full of misery
As this sad lady's was. Do it by me,
Do it again by me, the lost Aspatia;
And you shall find all true but the wild island.
I stand upon the sea-breach now, and think, [121
Mine arms thus, and mine hair blown with the wind,
Wild as that desert; and let all about me
Tell that I am forsaken. Do my face
(If thou hadst ever feeling of a sorrow)
Thus, thus, Antiphila: strive to make me look
Like Sorrow's monument; and the trees about me, [130
Let them be dry and leafless; let the rocks
Groan with continual surges; and behind me
Make all a desolation.—See, see, wenches,
A miserable life[12] of this poor picture!
OLYM. Dear madam!
ASP. I have done. Sit down; and let us
Upon that point fix all our eyes, that point there. [141
Make a dull silence, till you feel a sudden sadness
Give us new souls.

Enter CALIANAX.

CAL. The King may do this, and he may not do it.
My child is wronged, disgraced.—Well, how now, huswives?
What, at your ease! Is this a time to sit still? [151
Up, you young lazy whores, up, or I'll swinge you!
OLYM. Nay, good my lord—
CAL. You'll lie down shortly. Get you in, and work!
What, are you grown so resty you want heats?
We shall have some of the court-boys heat you shortly. [160
ANT. My lord, we do no more than we are charged:
It is the lady's pleasure we be thus.
In grief she is forsaken.
CAL. There's a rogue too,

[12] living presentation.

A young dissembling slave!—Well, get you in.—
I'll have a bout with that boy. 'Tis high time [169
Now to be valiant: I confess my youth
Was never prone that way. What, made an ass!
A court-stale![13] Well, I will be valiant,
And beat some dozen of these whelps; I will!
And there's another of 'em, a trim cheating soldier;
I'll maul that rascal; h'as out-braved me twice; [179
But now, I thank the gods, I am valiänt.—
Go, get you in.—I'll take a course with all. [*Exeunt* ANTIPHILA *and* OLYMPIAS.

ACT THREE

SCENE 1 (B)

The next morning, CLEON, STRATO, *and* DIPHILUS *are met in the anteroom to* EVADNE'S *bedchamber.*

CLE. Your sister is not up yet.

DIPH. Oh, brides must take their morning's rest; the night is troublesome.

STRA. But not tedious.

DIPH. What odds he has not my sister's maidenhead to-night? [9

STRA. None; it's odds against any bridegroom living he ne'er gets it while he lives.

DIPH. Y'are merry with my sister; you'll please to allow me the same freedom with your mother.

STRA. She's at your service.

DIPH. Then she's merry enough of herself; she needs no tickling. Knock at the door.

STRA. We shall interrupt them. [20

DIPH. No matter; they have the year before them.—[STRATO *knocks at the door.*

[*To* EVADNE *within.*] Good morrow, sister. Spare yourself to-day;
The night will come again.

[13] laughing-stock.

Enter AMINTOR.

AMIN. Who's there? My brother! I'm no readier[1] yet.
Your sister is but now up. [30

DIPH. You look as you had lost your eyes to-night:
I think you ha' not slept.

AMIN. I' faith, I have not.

DIPH. You have done better, then.

AMIN. We ventured for a boy; when he is twelve,
'A shall command against the foes of Rhodes.
Shall we be merry? [40

STRA. You cannot; you want sleep.

AMIN. 'Tis true. <But she,
As if she had drunk Lethe, or had made
Even with Heaven, did fetch so still a sleep,
So sweet and sound—>

DIPH. What's that?

AMIN. Your sister frets
This morning; and does turn her eyes upon me, [50
As people on their headsman. She does chafe,
And kiss, and chafe again, and clap my cheeks:
She's in another world.

DIPH. Then I had lost: I was about to lay
You had not got her maidenhead to-night.

AMIN. <Ha! does he not mock me?>
Y'ad lost indeed; [61
I do not use to bungle.

CLEO. You do deserve her.

AMIN. <I laid my lips to hers, and that wild breath,
That was so rude and rough to me last night,
Was sweet as April. I'll be guilty too,
If these be the effects.>

Enter MELANTIUS. [70

MEL. Good day, Amintor (for to me the name
Of brother is too distant: we are friends,
And that is nearer).

AMIN. Dear Melantius!

[1] no further dressed.

Let me behold thee. Is it possible?
MEL. What sudden gaze is this?
AMIN. 'Tis wondrous strange!
MEL. Why does thine eye desire so strict a view
Of that it knows so well? There's nothing here
That is not thine.
AMIN. I wonder much, Melantius,
To see those noble looks, that make me think
How virtuous thou art; and, on the sudden,
'Tis strange to me thou shouldst have worth and honor;
Or not be base, and false, and treacherous,
And every ill. But—
MEL., *at a loss to understand.* Stay, stay, my friend;
I fear this sound will not become our loves.
No more; embrace me.
AMIN. Oh, mistake me not!
I know thee to be full of all those deeds
That we frail men call good; but by the course
Of nature thou shouldst be as quickly changed
As are the winds; dissembling as the sea,
That now wears brows as smooth as virgins' be,
Tempting the merchant to invade his face,
And in an hour calls his billows up,
And shoots 'em at the sun, destroying all
'A carries on him. <Oh, how near am I
To utter my sick thoughts.>
MEL. But why, my friend, should I be so by nature?
AMIN. I have wed thy sister, who hath virtuous thoughts
Enough for one whole family; and it is strange
That you should feel no want.
MEL. Believe me, this is compliment too cunning for me.
DIPH. What should I be then by the course of nature,
They having both robbed me of so much virtue?
STRA. Oh, call the bride, my Lord Amintor,
That we may see her blush, and turn her eyes down.
It is the prettiest sport!
AMIN. Evadne!
EVAD., *within.* My lord?
AMIN. Come forth, my love;
Your brothers do attend, to wish you joy.
EVAD., *within.* I am not ready yet.
AMIN. Enough, enough.
EVAD., *within.* They'll mock me.
AMIN. Faith, thou shalt come in.

Enter EVADNE *from the bedchamber.*

MEL. Good morrow, sister. He that understands
Whom you have wed need not to wish you joy;
You have enough: take heed you be not proud.
DIPH. Oh, sister, what have you done?
EVAD. I done! why, what have I done?
STRA. My Lord Amintor swears you are no maid now.
EVAD. Pish!
STRA. I' faith, he does.
EVAD. I knew I should be mocked.
DIPH. With a truth.
EVAD. If 'twere to do again,
In faith I would not marry.
AMIN. <Nor I, by Heaven!>
DIPH. Sister, Dula swears
She heard you cry two rooms off.
EVAD. Fie, how you talk!
DIPH. Let's see you walk, Evadne. By my troth,
Y'are spoiled.
MEL. Amintor.
AMIN., *startled.* Ha!
MEL. Thou art sad.
AMIN. Who, I? I thank you for that.
Shall, Diphilus, thou and I sing a catch?
MEL. How!
AMIN. Prithee, let's.
MEL. Nay, that's too much the other way.
AMIN. I'm so lightened with my happiness!—How dost thou, love? Kiss me.
EVAD. I cannot love you; you tell tales of me.

AMIN. Nothing but what becomes us.
—Gentlemen,
Would you had all such wives, and all the world,
That I might be no wonder! Y'are all sad:
What, do you envy me? I walk, methinks,
On water, and ne'er sink, I am so light.
MEL. 'Tis well you are so.
AMIN. "Well"! how can I be other,
When she looks thus?—Is there no music there?
Let's dance.
MEL. Why, this is strange, Amintor!
AMIN. I do not know myself; yet I could wish
My joy were less.
DIPH. I'll marry too, if it will make one thus.
EVAD. <Amintor, hark.
AMIN. What says my love? I must obey.
EVAD. You do it scurvily, 'twill be perceived.>
CLEO. My lord, the King is here.

Enter KING *and* LYSIPPUS.

AMIN. Where?
STRA. And his brother.
KING. Good morrow, all!—
Amintor, joy on joy fall thick upon thee!—
And, madam, you are altered since I saw you;
I must salute you; you are now another's.
How liked you your night's rest?
EVAD. Ill, sir.
AMIN. Indeed,
She took but little.
LYS. You'll let her take more,
And thank her too, shortly.
KING. Amintor, wert thou truly honest till
Thou wert married?
AMIN. Yes, sir.
KING. Tell me, then, how shows
The sport unto thee?
AMIN. Why, well.
KING. What did you do?
AMIN. No more, nor less, than other couples use;
You know what 'tis; it has but a coarse name.
KING. But, prithee, I should think, by her black eye,
And her red cheek, she should be quick and stirring
In this same business; ha?
AMIN. I cannot tell;
I ne'er tried other, sir; but I perceive
She is as quick as you delivered.
KING. Well, you'll trust me then, Amintor, to choose
A wife for you again?
AMIN. No, never, sir.
KING. Why, like you this so ill?
AMIN. So well I like her.
For this I bow my knee in thanks to you,
And unto Heaven will pay my grateful tribute
Hourly; and do hope we shall draw out
A long contented life together here,
And die both, full of grey hairs, in one day:
For which the thanks is yours. But, if the powers
That rule us please to call her first away,
Without pride spoke, this world holds not a wife
Worthy to take her room.
KING. <I do not like this.> All forbear the room,
But you, Amintor, and your lady. [*Exeunt all but the* KING, AMINTOR, *and* EVADNE.
I have some speech with you, that may concern
Your after-living well.
AMIN. <'A will not tell me that he lies with her!
If he do, something heavenly stay my heart,
For I shall be apt to thrust this arm of mine
To acts unlawful!
KING. You will suffer me
To talk with her, Amintor, and not have
A jealous pang?
AMIN. Sir, I dare trust my wife

With whom she dares to talk, and not be jealous. [*Retires into the background.*

KING. How do you like Amintor? [280

EVAD. As I did, sir.

KING. How's that?

EVAD. As one that, to fulfil your will and pleasure,

I have given leave to call me wife and love.

KING. I see there is no lasting faith in sin;

They that break word with Heaven will break again [290

With all the world; and so dost thou with me.

EVAD. How, sir?

KING. This subtle woman's ignorance

Will not excuse you: thou hast taken oaths,

So great, methought, they did not well become

A woman's mouth, that thou wouldst ne'er enjoy [300

A man but me.

EVAD. I never did swear so;

You do me wrong.

KING. Day and night have heard it.

EVAD. I swore indeed that I would never love

A man of lower place; but, if your fortune

Should throw you from this height, I bade you trust [310

I would forsake you, and would bend to him

That won your throne. I love with my ambition,

Not with my eyes. But, if I ever yet

Touched any other, leprosy light here

Upon my face! which, for your royalty,

I would not stain!

KING. Why, thou dissemblest, and

It is in me to punish thee. [320

EVAD. Why, it is in me,

Then, not to love you, which will more afflict

Your body than your punishment can mine.

KING. But thou hast let Amintor lie with thee.

EVAD. I ha' not.

KING. Impudence! he says himself so.

EVAD. 'A lies. [330

KING. 'A does not.

EVAD. By this light, he does,

Strangely and basely! and I'll prove it so.

I did not only shun him for a night,

But told him I would never close with him.

KING. Speak lower; it is false.

EVAD. I am no man

To answer with a blow; or, if I were,

You are the King. But urge me not; 'tis most true. [341

KING. Do not I know the uncontrollëd thoughts

That youth brings with him, when his blood is high

With expectation and desire of that

He long hath waited for? Is not his spirit,

Though he be temperate, of a valiant strain [350

As this our age hath known? What could he do,

If such a sudden speech had met his blood,

But ruin thee for ever, if he had not killed thee?

He could not bear it thus: he is as we,

Or any other wronged man.

EVAD. It is dissembling.

KING. Take him! farewell: henceforth I am thy foe; [361

And what disgraces I can blot thee with look for.

EVAD. Stay, sir!—Amintor!—[*To the* KING.] You shall hear.—Amintor!

AMIN., *coming forward.* What, my love?

EVAD. Amintor, thou hast an ingenious[2] look [370

And shouldst be virtuous: it amazeth me

That thou canst make such base malicious lies!

AMIN. What, my dear wife?

EVAD. "Dear wife"! I do despise thee.

Why, nothing can be baser than to sow

Dissension amongst lovers.

[2] ingenuous.

AMIN. Lovers! Who?
EVAD. The king and me—
AMIN. Oh, God!
EVAD. Who should live long, and love without distaste,
Were it not for such pickthanks[3] as thyself.
Did you lie with me? Swear now, and be punished
In hell for this!
AMIN. The faithless sin I made
To fair Aspatia is not yet revenged;
It follows me.—I will not lose a word
To this vild woman: but to you, my King,
The anguish of my soul thrusts out this truth:
Y'are a tyrant! and not so much to wrong
An honest man thus as to take a pride
In talking with him of it.
EVAD. Now, sir, see
How loud this fellow lied!
AMIN. You that can know to wrong should know how men
Must right themselves. What punishment is due
From me to him that shall abuse my bed?
Is it not death? Nor can that satisfy,
Unless I send your limbs[4] through all the land,
To show how nobly I have freed myself.
KING. Draw not thy sword; thou knowest I cannot fear
A subject's hand; but thou shalt feel the weight
Of this, if thou dost rage.
AMIN. The weight of that!
If you have any worth, for Heaven's sake, think
I fear not swords; for, as you are mere man,
I dare as easily kill you for this deed,
As you dare think to do it; but there is
Divinity about you that strikes dead
My rising passions: as you are my King,
I fall before you, and present my sword
To cut mine own flesh, if it be your will.
Alas, I am nothing but a multitude
Of walking griefs! Yet, should I murder you,
I might before the world take the excuse
Of madness: for, compare my injuries,
And they will well appear too sad a weight
For reason to endure. But fall I first
Amongst my sorrows, ere my treacherous hand
Touch holy things! But why (I know not what
I have to say), why did you choose out me
To make thus wretched? There were thousands, fools
Easy to work on and of state enough,
Within the island.
EVAD. I would not have a fool;
It were no credit for me.
AMIN. Worse and worse!
Thou, that darest talk unto thy husband thus,
Profess thyself a whore, and, more than so,
Resolve to be so still!—It is my fate
To bear and bow beneath a thousand griefs,
To keep that little credit with the world!—
But there were wise ones too; you might have ta'en
Another.
KING. No: for I believed thee honest,[5]
As thou wert valiant.
AMIN. All the happiness[6]
Bestowed upon me turns into disgrace.—
Gods, take your honesty again, for I
Am loaden with it!—Good my lord the King,
Be private in it.
KING. Thou mayst live, Amintor,
Free as thy king, if thou wilt wink at this,
And be a means that we may meet in secret.
AMIN. A bawd! Hold, hold, my breast! A bitter curse
Seize me, if I forget not all respects
That are religious, on another word

[3] tale-tellers.
[4] B, lives.
[5] loyal.
[6] good fortune.

Sounded like that, and through a sea of sins
Will wade to my revenge, though I should call
Pains here and after life upon my soul!
KING. Well, I am resolute[7] you lay not with her;
And so I leave you. [*Exit.*
EVAD. You must needs be prating;
And see what follows!
AMIN. Prithee, vex me not.
Leave me; I am afraid some sudden start
Will pull a murder on me.
EVAD. I am gone;
I love my life well. [*Exit.*
AMIN. I hate mine as much.
This 'tis to break a troth! I should be glad,
If all this tide of grief would make me mad.

SCENE II (B)

A day or two later, MELANTIUS, *puzzled by the attitude of* AMINTOR, *determines to ascertain the truth. He is in a room in the palace.*

MEL. I'll know the cause of all Amintor's griefs,
Or friendship shall be idle.

Enter CALIANAX.

CAL. Oh, Melantius,
My daughter will die!
MEL. Trust me, I am sorry:
Would thou hadst ta'en her room!
CAL. Thou art a slave,
A cut-throat slave, a bloody, treacherous slave!
MEL. Take heed, old man; thou wilt be heard to rave,
And lose thine offices.
CAL. I am valiant grown
At all these years, and thou art but a slave!
MEL. Leave!
Some company will come, and I respect
Thy years, not thee, so much, that I could wish
To laugh at thee alone.
CAL. I'll spoil your mirth:
I mean to fight with thee. [*Throwing his cloak aside, and drawing his sword.*] There lie, my cloak.
This was my father's sword, and he durst fight.
Are you prepared?
MEL. Why wilt thou dote thyself
Out of thy life? Hence, get thee to bed,
Have careful looking-to, and eat warm things,
And trouble not me: my head is full of thoughts
More weighty than thy life or death can be.
CAL. You have a name in war, where you stand safe
Amongst a multitude; but I will try
What you dare do unto a weak old man
In single fight. You'll give ground, I fear.
Come, draw.
MEL. I will not draw, unless thou pull'st thy death
Upon thee with a stroke. There's no one blow
That thou canst give hath strength enough to kill me.
Tempt me not so far, then: the power of earth
Shall not redeem thee.
CAL. <I must let him alone:
He's stout and able; and, to say the truth,
However I may set a face and talk,
I am not valiant. When I was a youth,
I kept my credit with a testy trick
I had 'mongst cowards, but durst never fight.>
MEL. I will not promise to preserve your life,
If you do stay.
CAL. <I would give half my land
That I durst fight with that proud man a little.
If I had men to hold him, I would beat him
Till he asked me mercy.>
MEL. Sir, will you be gone?
CAL. <I dare not stay; but I will go home and beat
My servants all over for this.> [*Exit.*

[7] convinced.

MEL. This old fellow haunts me;
But the distracted carriage of mine Amintor [81
Takes deeply on me. I will find the cause:
I fear his conscience cries he wronged Aspatia.

Enter AMINTOR.

AMIN. <Men's eyes are not so subtle to perceive
My inward misery: I bear my grief
Hid from the world. How art thou [90 wretched then?
For aught I know, all husbands are like me,
And every one I talk with of his wife
Is but a well dissembler of his woes,
As I am. Would I knew it! for the rareness
Afflicts me now.>

MEL. Amintor, we have not enjoyed our friendship of late, for we were wont to change our souls in talk. [101

AMIN. Melantius, I can tell thee a good jest of Strato and a lady the last day.

MEL. How was't?

AMIN. Why, such an odd one!

MEL. I have longed to speak with you; not of an idle jest that's forced, but of matters you are bound to utter to me.

AMIN. What is that, my friend? [110

MEL. I have observed your words fall from your tongue
Wildly; and all your carriage
Like one that strove to shew his merry mood,
When he were ill disposed. You were not wont
To put such scorn into your speech, or wear
Upon your face ridiculous jollity. [120
Some sadness sits here, which your cunning would
Cover o'er with smiles, and 'twill not be. What is it?

AMIN. A sadness here, [Melantius]! What cause
Can fate provide for me to make me so?
Am I not loved through all this isle? The King
Rains greatness on me. Have I not received [131
A lady to my bed, that in her eye
Keeps mounting fire, and on her tender cheeks
Inevitable[8] color, in her heart
A prison for all virtue? Are not you,
Which is above all joys, my constant friend?
What sadness can I have? No; I am light, [140
And feel the courses of my blood more warm
And stirring than they were. Faith, marry too;
And you will feel so unexpressed a joy
In chaste embraces that you will indeed
Appear another.

MEL. You may shape, Amintor,
Causes to cozen the whole world withal,
And yourself too; but 'tis not like a friend [151
To hide your soul from me. 'Tis not your nature
To be thus idle. I have seen you stand
As you were blasted 'midst of all your mirth,
Call thrice aloud, and then start, feigning joy
So coldly!—World, what do I here? A friend [160
Is nothing. Heaven, I would ha' told that man
My secret sins! I'll search an unknown land,
And there plant friendship; all is withered here.
Come with a compliment! I would have fought,
Or told my friend 'a lied, ere soothed[9] him so.— [170
Out of my bosom!

AMIN. But there is nothing.

MEL. Worse and worse! farewell:
From this time have acquaintance, but no friend.

AMIN. Melantius, stay: you shall know what that is.

[8] Irresistible.
[9] humbugged.

MEL. See how you played with friendship! Be advised
How you give cause unto yourself to say
You ha' lost a friend.
AMIN. Forgive what I ha' done;
For I am so o'ergone with injuries
Unheard of that I lose consideration
Of what I ought to do. [*Weeping.*] Oh, oh!
MEL. Do not weep.
What is't? May I once but know the man
Hath turned my friend thus!
AMIN. I had spoke at first,
But that—
MEL. But what?
AMIN. I held it most unfit
For you to know. Faith, do not know it yet.
MEL. Thou see'st my love, that will keep company
With thee in tears; hide nothing, then, from me;
For, when I know the cause of thy distemper,
With mine old armor I'll adorn myself,
My resolution, and cut through thy foes,
Unto thy quiet, till I place thy heart
As peaceable as spotless innocence.
What is it?
AMIN. Why, 'tis this—it is too big
To get out—let my tears make way awhile.
MEL. Punish me strangely, Heaven, if he scape
Of life or fame, that brought this youth to this!
AMIN. Your sister—
MEL. Well said.
AMIN. You'll wish't unknown,
When you have heard it.
MEL. No.
AMIN. Is much to blame,
And to the King has given her honor up,
And lives in whoredom with him.
MEL. How's this?
Thou art run mad with injury indeed;
Thou couldst not utter this else. Speak again;
For I forgive it freely; tell thy griefs.
AMIN. She's wanton: I am loth to say, a whore,
Though it be true.
MEL. Speak yet again, before mine anger grow
Up beyond throwing down. What are thy griefs?
AMIN. By all our friendship, these.
MEL. What, am I tame?
After mine actions, shall the name of friend
Blot all our family and strike the brand
Of "whore" upon my sister, unrevenged?
My shaking flesh, be thou a witness for me,
With what unwillingness I go to scourge
This railer, whom my folly hath called friend?
I will not take thee basely: thy sword
[*Draws his sword.*
Hangs near thy hand: draw it, that I may whip
Thy rashness to repentance; draw thy sword!
AMIN. Not on thee, did thine anger go as high
As the wild surges. Thou shouldst do me ease
Here and eternally, if thy noble hand
Would cut me from my sorrows.
MEL. This is base
And fearful.[10] They that use to utter lies
Provide not blows but words to qualify[11]
The men they wronged. Thou hast a guilty cause.
AMIN. Thou pleasest me; for so much more like this
Will raise my anger up above my griefs
(Which is a passion easier to be borne),
And I shall then be happy.
MEL. Take, then, more
To raise thine anger: 'tis mere cowardice
Makes thee not draw; and I will leave thee dead,
However. But, if thou art so much pressed
With guilt and fear as not to dare to fight,
I'll make thy memory loathed, and fix a scandal

[10] cowardly. [11] mollify.

Upon thy name forever. [279
AMIN., *drawing his sword.* Then I draw,
As justly as our magistrates their swords
To cut offenders off. I knew before
'Twould grate your ears; but it was base in you
To urge a weighty secret from your friend,
And then rage at it. I shall be at ease,
If I be killed; and, if you fall by me,
I shall not long outlive you. [290
MEL. Stay awhile.—
The name of friend is more than family,
Or all the world besides: I was a fool.
Thou searching human nature, that didst wake
To do me wrong, thou art inquisitive,
And thrusts me upon questions that will take
My sleep away! Would I had died, ere known [300
This sad dishonor!—Pardon me, my friend! [*Sheathes his sword.*
If thou wilt strike, here is a faithful heart;
Pierce it, for I will never heave my hand
To thine. Behold the power thou hast in me!
I do believe my sister is a whore,
A leprous one. Put up thy sword, young man. [310
AMIN. How should I bear it, then, she being so?
I fear, my friend, that you will lose me shortly; [*Sheathes his sword.*
And I shall do a foul act on myself,
Through these disgraces.
MEL. Better half the land
Were buried quick[12] together. No, Amintor;
Thou shalt have ease. Oh, this adul- [320
terous King,
That drew her to't! Where got he the spirit
To wrong me so?
AMIN. What is it, then, to me,
If it be wrong to you?
MEL. Why, not so much.
The credit of our house is thrown away.
But from his iron den I'll waken Death,
And hurl him on this King. My honesty
Shall steel my sword; and on its hor- [331
rid point
I'll wear my cause, that shall amaze the eyes
Of this proud man, and be too glittering
For him to look on.
AMIN. I have quite undone my fame.
MEL. Dry up thy watery eyes,
And cast a manly look upon my face;
For nothing is so wild as I, thy friend, [340
Till I have freed thee. Still this swelling breast.
I go thus from thee, and will never cease
My vengeance till I find thy heart at peace.
AMIN. It must not be so. Stay.—Mine eyes would tell
How loth I am to this; but, love and tears,
Leave me awhile! for I have hazarded [350
All that this world calls happy.—Thou hast wrought
A secret from me, under name of friend,
Which art could ne'er have found nor torture wrung
From out my bosom. Give it me again;
For I will find it, wheresoe'er it lies,
Hid in the mortal'st part. Invent a way
To give it back. [359
MEL. Why would you have it back?
I will to death pursue him with revenge.
AMIN. Therefore I call it back from thee; for I know
Thy blood so high, that thou wilt stir in this,
And shame me to posterity. Take to thy weapon! [*Draws his sword.*
MEL. Hear thy friend, that bears more years than thou. [369
AMIN. I will not hear: but draw, or I—
MEL. Amintor!
AMIN. Draw, then; for I am full as resolute
As fame and honor can enforce me be:
I cannot linger. Draw!
MEL., *drawing his sword.* I do. But is not
My share of credit equal [hurt] with thine,
If I do stir? [380

[12] alive.

AMIN. No; for it will be called
Honor in thee to spill thy sister's blood,
If she her birth abuse; and, on the King,
A brave revenge; but on me, that have walked
With patience in it, it will fix the name
Of fearful[13] cuckold. Oh, that word! Be quick.
MEL. Then join with me.
AMIN. I dare not do a sin,
Or else I would. Be speedy.
MEL. Then dare not fight with me; for that's a sin.
<His grief distracts him.> Call thy thoughts again,
And to thyself pronounce the name of "friend,"
And see what that will work. I will not fight.
AMIN. You must.
MEL., *sheathing his sword.* I will be killed first. Though my passions
Offered the like to you, 'tis not this earth
Shall buy my reason to it. Think awhile,
For you are (I must weep when I speak that)
Almost beside yourself.
AMIN., *sheathing his sword.* Oh, my soft temper!
So many sweet words from thy sister's mouth,
I am afraid, would make me take her to
Embrace, and pardon her. I am mad indeed,
And know not what I do. Yet have a care
Of me in what thou dost.
MEL. Why, thinks my friend
I will forget his honor? or, to save
The bravery of our house, will lose his fame,
And fear to touch the throne of majesty?
AMIN. A curse will follow that; but rather live
And suffer with me.
MEL. I will do what worth
Shall bid me, and no more.
AMIN. Faith, I am sick,
And desperately, I hope; yet, leaning thus,
I feel a kind of ease.
MEL. Come, take again
Your mirth about you.
AMIN. I shall never do't.
MEL. I warrant you; look up; we'll walk together;
Put thine arm here; all shall be well again.
AMIN. Thy love (oh, wretched!)—ay, thy love, Melantius!
Why, I have nothing else!
MEL. Be merry, then. [*Exeunt.*

[13] cowardly.

SCENE III (B)

A little while later, MELANTIUS *is alone in another apartment of the palace.*

MEL. This worthy young man may do violence
Upon himself; but I have cherished him
To my best power, and sent him smiling from me,
To counterfeit again.—Sword, hold thine edge;
My heart will never fail me.

Enter DIPHILUS.

Diphilus!
Thou com'st as sent.
DIPH. Yonder has been such laughing.
MEL. Betwixt whom?
DIPH. Why, our sister and the King.
I thought their spleens would break; they laughed us all
Out of the room.
MEL. They must weep, Diphilus.
DIPH. Must they?
MEL. They must.
Thou art my brother; and, if I did believe
Thou hadst a base thought, I would rip it out,
Lie where it durst.
DIPH. You should not; I would first
Mangle myself and find it.
MEL. That was spoke
According to our strain.[14] Come, join thy hands to mine,
And swear a firmness to what project I
Shall lay before thee.
DIPH. You do wrong us both.

[14] blood.

People hereafter shall not say there passed
A bond, more than our loves, to tie our lives
And deaths together.
MEL. It is as nobly said as I would wish.
Anon I'll tell you wonders: we are wronged.
DIPH. But, I will tell you now, we'll right ourselves.
MEL. Stay not: prepare the armor in my house;
And what friends you can draw unto our side,
Not knowing of the cause, make ready too.
Haste, Diphilus, the time requires it, haste!— [*Exit* DIPHILUS.
I hope my cause is just; I know my blood
Tells me it is; and I will credit it.
To take revenge, and lose myself withal,
Were idle, and to scape impossible,
Without I had the fort, which (misery!)
Remaining in the hands of my old enemy
Calianax—but I must have it. <See

Enter CALIANAX, *passing across the stage.*

Where he comes shaking by me!> Good my lord,
Forget your spleen to me: I never wronged you,
But would have peace with every man.
CAL., *stopping.* 'Tis well;
If I durst fight, your tongue would lie at quiet.
MEL. Y'are touchy without all cause.
CAL. Do, mock me.
MEL. By mine honor, I speak truth.
CAL. Honor! where is't?
MEL. See, what starts you make
Into your idle hatred, to my love
And freedom to you. I come with resolution
To obtain a suit of you.
CAL. A suit of me!
[*Sarcastically.*] 'Tis very like it should be granted, sir.
MEL. Nay, go not hence.
'Tis this: you have the keeping of the fort,
And I would wish you, by the love you ought
To bear unto me, to deliver it
Into my hands.
CAL. I am in hope thou art mad,
To talk to me thus.
MEL. But there is a reason
To move you to it: I would kill the King,
That wronged you and your daughter.
CAL. Out, traitor!
MEL. Nay, but stay: I cannot scape, the deed once done,
Without I have this fort.
CAL. And should I help thee?
Now thy treacherous mind betrays itself.
MEL., *ferociously, drawing his sword.* Come, delay me not;
Give me a sudden answer, or already
Thy last is spoke! Refuse not offered love
When it comes clad in secrets.
CAL. <If I say
I will not, he will kill me; I do see't
Writ in his looks; and should I say I will,
He'll run and tell the King.> I do not shun
Your friendship, dear Melantius; but this cause
Is weighty: give me but an hour to think.
MEL., *sheathing his sword.* Take it. <I know this goes unto the King;
But I am armed.> [*Exit.*
CAL. Methinks I feel myself
But twenty now again. This fighting fool
Wants policy: I shall revenge my girl,
And make her red[15] again. I pray my legs
Will last that pace that I will carry them:
I shall want breath before I find the King. [*Exit.*

ACT FOUR

SCENE I (F)

MELANTIUS *enters to* EVADNE *in one of her apartments, where she is attended by her Ladies. It is but a little later the same day.*

[15] red-checked.

MEL. Save you!
EVAD. Save you, sweet brother.
MEL. In my blunt eye, methinks, you look, Evadne—
EVAD. Come, you would make me blush.
MEL. I would, Evadne;
I shall displease my ends else.
EVAD. You shall, if you
Commend me; I am bashful. Come sir, how do
I look?
MEL. I would not have your women hear me
Break into commendation of you; 'tis not
Seemly.
EVAD. Go, wait me in the gallery.
[*Exeunt Ladies.*
Now speak.
MEL. I'll lock the door first. [*Does so.*
EVAD. Why?
MEL. I will not have your gilded things, that dance
In visitation with their Milan skins,[1]
Choke up my business.
EVAD. You are strangely disposed, sir.
MEL. Good madam, not to make you merry.
EVAD. No; if you praise me, it will make me sad.
MEL. Such a sad commendation I have for you.
EVAD. Brother,
The court hath made you witty and learn to riddle.
MEL. I praise the court for't: has it learned you nothing?
EVAD. Me!
MEL. Ay, Evadne; thou art young and handsome,
A lady of a sweet complexiön,
And such a flowing carriage that it cannot
Choose but inflame a kingdom.
EVAD. Gentle brother!
MEL. 'Tis yet in thy repentance, foolish woman,
To make me gentle.
EVAD. How is this?
MEL. 'Tis base;
And I could blush, at these years, thorough all
My honored scars, to come to such a parley.
EVAD. I understand you not.
MEL. You dare not, fool!
They that commit thy faults fly the remembrance.
EVAD. My faults, sir! I would have you know, I care not
If they were written here, here in my forehead.
MEL. Thy body is too little for the story,
The lusts of which would fill another woman,
Though she had twins within her.
EVAD. This is saucy:
Look you intrude no more! There's your way.
MEL. Thou art my way, and I will tread upon thee,
Till I find truth out.
EVAD. What truth is that you look for?
MEL. Thy long-lost honor. Would the gods had set me
Rather to grapple with the plague or stand
One of their loudest bolts! Come, tell me quickly;
Do it without enforcement, and take heed
You swell me not above my temper.
EVAD. How, sir!
Where got you this report?
MEL. Where there was people—
In every place.
EVAD. They and the seconds of it
Are base people: believe them not; they lied.
MEL. Do not play with mine anger; do not, wretch! [*Seizes her.*
I come to know that desperate fool that drew thee
From thy fair life. Be wise, and lay him open.
EVAD. Unhand me, and learn manners! Such another
Forgetfulness forfeits your life.
MEL. Quench me this mighty humor, and then tell me

[1] gloves.

Whose whore you are; for you are one; I know it.
Let all mine honors perish but I'll find him,
Though he lie locked up in thy blood! Be sudden;
There is no facing it;[2] and be not flattered.
The burnt air, when the Dog[3] reigns, is not fouler
Than thy contagious name, till thy repentance
(If the gods grant thee any) purge thy sickness.
EVAD. Begone! you are my brother; that's your safety.
MEL. I'll be a wolf first. 'Tis, to be thy brother,
An infamy below the sin of coward.
I am as far from being part of thee
As thou art from thy virtue. Seek a kindred
'Mongst sensual beasts, and make a goat thy brother;
A goat is cooler. Will you tell me yet?
EVAD. If you stay here and rail thus, I shall tell you
I'll ha' you whipped! Get you to your command,
And there preach to your sentinels, and tell them
What a brave man you are: I shall laugh at you.
MEL. You're grown a glorious whore! Where be your fighters?
What mortal fool durst raise thee to this daring,
And I alive? By my just sword, h'ad safer
Bestrid a billow, when the angry North
Ploughs up the sea, or made Heaven's fire his foe!
Work me no higher. Will you discover yet?
EVAD. The fellow's mad. Sleep, and speak sense.
MEL. Force my swoln heart no further; I would save thee.
Your great maintainers are not here; they dare not.

[2] facing it out.
[3] Sirius, the dog-star.

Would they were all, and armed! I would speak loud;
Here's one should thunder to 'em. Will you tell me?
Thou hast no hope to scape. He that dares most,
And damns away his soul to do thee service,
Will sooner snatch meat from a hungry lion
Than come to rescue thee. Thou hast death about thee.
H'as undone thine honor, poisoned thy virtue,
And, of a lovely rose, left thee a canker.
EVAD. Let me consider.
MEL. Do, whose child thou wert,
Whose honor thou hast murdered, whose grave opened,
And so pulled on the gods that, in their justice,
They must restore him flesh again, and life,
And raise his dry bones to revenge this scandal.
EVAD. The gods are not of my mind; they had better
Let 'em lie sweet still in the earth; they'll stink here.
MEL. Do you raise mirth out of my easiness?
Forsake me, then, all weaknesses of nature [*Draws his sword.*
That make men women. Speak, you whore, speak truth,
Or, by the dear soul of thy sleeping father,
This sword shall be thy lover. Tell, or I'll kill thee;
And, when thou hast told all, thou wilt deserve it.
EVAD. You will not murder me?
MEL. No; 'tis a justice, and a noble one,
To put the light out of such base offenders.
EVAD., *calling*. Help!
MEL. By thy foul self, no human help shall help thee,
If thou criest! When I have killed thee, as I

Have vowed to do, if thou confess not, naked
As thou hast left thine honor will I leave thee,
That on thy branded flesh the world may read
Thy black shame and my justice. Wilt thou bend yet?
EVAD. Yes.
MEL. Up, and begin your story.
EVAD. Oh, I am miserable!
MEL. 'Tis true, thou art. Speak truth still.
EVAD. I have offended: noble sir, forgive me!
MEL. With what secure slave?
EVAD. Do not ask me, sir;
Mine own remembrance is a misery
Too mighty for me.
MEL. Do not fall back again;
My sword's unsheathed yet.
EVAD. What shall I do?
MEL. Be true, and make your fault less.
EVAD. I dare not tell.
MEL. Tell, or I'll be this day a-killing thee.
EVAD. Will you forgive me, then?
MEL. Stay; I must ask
Mine honor first.
I have too much foolish nature in me: Speak.
EVAD. Is there none else here?
MEL. None but a fearful[4] conscience; that's too many.
Who is't?
EVAD. Oh, hear me gently! It was the King.
MEL. No more.—[*Sheathing his sword.*] My worthy father's and my services
Are liberally rewarded! King, I thank thee!
For all my dangers and my wounds thou hast paid me
In my own metal: these are soldiers' thanks!—
How long have you lived thus, Evadne?
EVAD. Too long.
MEL. Too late you find it. Can you be very sorry?

[4] cowardly.

EVAD. Would I were half as blameless!
MEL. Evadne, thou wilt to thy trade again.
EVAD. First to my grave.
MEL. Would gods thou hadst been so blest!
Dost thou not hate this King now? Prithee, hate him:
Couldst thou not curse him? I command thee, curse him;
Curse till the gods hear, and deliver him
To thy just wishes. Yet I fear, Evadne,
You had rather play your game out.
EVAD. No; I feel
Too many sad confusions here, to let in
Any loose flame hereafter.
MEL. Dost thou not feel, amongst all those, one brave anger,
That breaks out nobly and directs thine arm
To kill this base King?
EVAD. All the gods forbid it!
MEL. No, all the gods require it;
They are dishonored in him.
EVAD. 'Tis too fearful.
MEL. Y'are valiant in his bed, and bold enough
To be a stale whore, and have your madam's name
Discourse for grooms and pages, and, hereafter,
When his cool majesty hath laid you by,
To be at pension with some needy sir
For meat and coarser clothes; thus far you know
No fear. Come, you shall kill him.
EVAD. Good sir!
MEL. An 'twere to kiss him dead, thou'dst smother him.
Be wise, and kill him. Canst thou live, and know
What noble minds shall make thee; see thyself
Found out with every finger, made the shame
Of all successions, and in this great ruin
Thy brother and thy noble husband broken?
Thou shalt not live thus. Kneel, and swear to help me,

When I shall call thee to it; or, by all
Holy in Heaven and earth, thou shalt not live [310
To breathe a full hour longer; not a thought!
Come, 'tis a righteous oath. Give me thy hands,
And, both to Heaven held up, swear, by that wealth
This lustful thief stole from thee, when I say it,
To let his foul soul out.
EVAD. Here I swear it; [*Kneels.* [320
And, all you spirits of abusëd ladies,
Help me in this performance!
MEL., *raising her.* Enough, this must
Be known to none but you and I, Evadne;
Not to your lord,
Though he be wise and noble, and a fellow
Dares step as far into a worthy action
As the most daring, ay, as far as justice.
Ask me not why. Farewell. [*Exit.* [331
EVAD. Would I could say so to my black disgrace!
Oh, where have I been all this time? How friended,
That I should lose myself thus desperately
And none, for pity, show me how I wandered?
There is not in the compass of the light
A more unhappy creature: sure, I am monstrous; [342
For I have done those follies, those mad mischiefs,
Would dare[5] a woman. Oh, my loaden soul,
Be not so cruel to me; choke not up
The way to my repentance!

Enter AMINTOR.

Oh, my lord! [350
AMIN. How now?
EVAD., *kneeling.* My much abused lord!
AMIN. This cannot be!
EVAD. I do not kneel to live; I dare not hope it;
The wrongs I did are greater. Look upon me,
Though I appear with all my faults.
AMIN. Stand up. [359
This is a new way to beget more sorrow.
Heaven knows I have too many. Do not mock me:
Though I am tame, and bred up with my wrongs,
Which are my foster-brothers, I may leap,
Like a hand-wolf[6] into my natural wildness,
And do an outrage. Prithee, do not mock me. [370
EVAD. My whole life is so leprous, it infects
All my repentance. I would buy your pardon,
Though at the highest set,[7] even with my life—
That slight contrition, that's no sacrifice
For what I have committed.
AMIN. Sure, I dazzle; [389
There cannot be a faith in that foul woman
That knows no god more mighty than her mischiefs.
Thou dost still worse, still number on thy faults,
To press my poor heart thus. Can I believe
There's any seed of virtue in that woman
Left to shoot up, that dares go on in sin
Known, and so known as thine is? [391
Oh, Evadne!
Would there were any safety in thy sex,
That I might put a thousand sorrows off,
And credit thy repentance! but I must not.
Thou hast brought me to that dull calamity, [399
To that strange misbelief of all the world
And all things that are in it, that I fear
I shall fall like a tree, and find my grave,
Only rememb'ring that I grieve.
EVAD. My lord,
Give me your griefs; you are an innocent,
A soul as white as Heaven; let not my sins

[5] frighten.
[6] a tame wolf.
[7] rate.

Perish your noble youth. I do not fall here
To shadow by dissembling with my tears
(As all say women can) or to make less
What my hot will hath done, which Heaven and you
Know to be tougher than the hand of time
Can cut from man's remembrance; no, I do not;
I do appear the same, the same Evadne,
Dressed in the shames I lived in, the same monster.
But these are names of honor to what I am;
I do present myself the foulest creature,
Most poisonous, dangerous, and despised of men,
Lerna e'er bred, or Nilus. I am hell,
Till you, my dear lord, shoot your light into me,
The beams of your forgiveness; I am soul-sick,
And wither with the fear of one condemned,
Till I have got your pardon.

AMIN. Rise, Evadne.
Those heavenly powers that put this good into thee
Grant a continuance of it! I forgive thee:
Make thyself worthy of it; and take heed,
Take heed, Evadne, this be serious.
Mock not the powers above, that can and dare
Give thee a great example of their justice
To all ensuing ages,[8] if thou play'st
With thy repentance, the best sacrifice.

EVAD. I have done nothing good to win belief,
My life hath been so faithless. All the creatures
Made for Heaven's honors have their ends, and good ones,
All but the cozening crocodiles, false women.
They reign here like those plagues, those killing sores,
Men pray against; and, when they die, like tales
Ill told and unbelieved, they pass away
And go to dust forgotten. But, my lord,
Those short days I shall number to my rest
(As many must not see me) shall, though too late,
Though in my evening, yet perceive I[9] will,
Since I can do no good, because a woman,
Reach constantly at something that is near it.
I will redeem one minute of my age,
Or, like another Niobe, I'll weep,
Till I am water.

AMIN. I am now dissolved;
My frozen soul melts. May each sin thou hast
Find a new mercy! Rise; I am at peace.
Hadst thou been thus, thus excellently good,
Before that devil-king tempted thy frailty,
Sure thou hadst made a star. Give me thy hand:
From this time I will know thee; and, as far
As honor gives me leave, be thy Amintor.
When we meet next, I will salute thee fairly,
And pray the gods to give thee happy days.
My charity shall go along with thee,
Though my embraces must be far from thee.
I should ha' killed thee, but this sweet repentance
Locks up my vengeance: for which thus I kiss thee—
The last kiss we must take: and would to Heaven
The holy priest that gave our hands together
Had given us equal virtues! Go, Evadne.
The gods thus part our bodies. Have a care
My honor falls no farther: I am well, then.

[8] Qq. and F, eyes.

[9] B, A.

EVAD. All the dear joys here, and above hereafter,
Crown thy fair soul! Thus I take leave, my lord;
And never shall you see the foul Evadne,
Till she have tried all honored means that may
Set her in rest and wash her stains away.
[*Exit* AMINTOR.

SCENE II (B)

The banqueting chamber in the palace, a little later. Hautboys play within. The KING *enters, talking to* CALIANAX, *who has just told him the astounding story of* MELANTIUS' *intended treason.*

KING. I cannot tell how I should credit this
From you, that are his enemy.
CAL. I am sure
He said it to me; and I'll justify it
What way he dares oppose—[*As an afterthought.*] but with my sword.
KING. But did he break, without all circumstance,
To you, his foe, that he would have the fort,
To kill me, and then scape?
CAL. If he deny it,
I'll make him blush.
KING. It sounds incredibly.
CAL. Ay, so does everything I say of late.
KING. Not so, Calianax.
CAL. Yes, I should sit
Mute, whilst a rogue with strong arms cuts your throat.
KING. Well, I will try him; and, if this be true,
I'll pawn my life I'll find it; if't be false,
And that you clothe your hate in such a lie,
You shall hereafter dote in your own house,
Not in the court.
CAL. Why, if it be a lie,
Mine ears are false, for I'll be sworn I heard it.
Old men are good for nothing; you were best
Put me to death for hearing, and free him
For meaning it. You would [h]a' trusted me
Once; but the time is altered.
KING. And will still,
Where I may do with justice to the world.
You have no witness?
CAL. Yes, myself.
KING. No more,
I mean, there were that heard it?
CAL. How? no more!
Would you have more? Why, am not I enough
To hang a thousand rogues?
KING. But so you may
Hang honest men too, if you please.
CAL. I may!
'Tis like I will do so: there are a hundred
Will swear it for a need too, if I say it.
KING. Such witnesses we need not.
CAL. And 'tis hard
If my word cannot hang a boisterous knave.
KING. Enough.—[*Calling.*] Where's Strato?

Enter STRATO.

STRATO. Sir?
KING. Why, where's all the company? Call Amintor in;
Evadne. Where's my brother? and Melantius?
Bid him come too; and Diphilus. Call all
That are without there.—[*Exit* STRATO.] If he should desire
The combat of you, 'tis not in the power
Of all our laws to hinder it, unless
We mean to quit 'em.
CAL. Why, if you do think
'Tis fit an old man and a councillor
To fight for what he says, then you may grant it.

Enter AMINTOR, EVADNE, MELANTIUS, DIPHILUS, LYSIPPUS, CLEON, STRATO, *and* DIAGORAS.

KING. Come, sirs!—Amintor, thou art yet a bridegroom,
And I will use thee so; thou shalt sit down.—
Evadne, sit;—and you, Amintor, too;

This banquet is for you, sir.—Who has brought
A merry tale about him, to raise laughter
Amongst our wine? Why, Strato, where art thou?
Thou wilt chop out with them unseasonably,
When I desire 'em not.
STRA. 'Tis my ill luck, sir, so to spend them, then.
KING. Reach me a bowl of wine.—Melantius, thou
Art sad.
MEL. I should be, sir, the merriest here,
But I ha' ne'er a story of mine own
Worth telling at this time.
KING. Give me the wine.—
Melantius, I am now considering
How easy 'twere for any man we trust
To poison one of us in such a bowl.
MEL. I think it were not hard, sir, for a knave.
CAL. <Such as you are.>
KING. I' faith, 'twere easy. It becomes us well
To get plain-dealing men about ourselves;
Such as you all are here.—Amintor, to thee;
And to thy fair Evadne. [*Drinks.*
MEL. <Have you thought
Of this, Calianax?
CAL. Yes, marry, have I.
MEL. And what's your resolution?
CAL. You shall have it,—
[*To himself.*] Soundly, I warrant you.>
KING. Reach to Amintor, Strato.
AMIN. Here, my love;
[*Drinks and then hands the cup to* EVADNE.
This wine will do thee wrong, for it will set
Blushes upon thy cheeks; and, till thou dost
A fault, 'twere pity.
KING. Yet I wonder much
Of the strange desperation of these men
That dare attempt such acts here in our state:
He could not scape that did it.
MEL. Were he known,
Unpossible.
KING. It would be known, Melantius.
MEL. It ought to be. If he got then away,
He must wear all our lives upon his sword;
He need not fly the island; he must leave
No one alive.
KING. No; I should think no man
Could kill me, and scape clear, but that old man.
CAL. But I! Heaven bless me! I! should I, my liege?
KING. I do not think thou wouldst; but yet thou mightst,
For thou hast in thy hands the means to scape,
By keeping of the fort.—He has, Melantius;
And he has kept it well.
MEL. From cobwebs, sir;
'Tis clean swept; I can find no other art
In keeping of it now. 'Twas ne'er besieged
Since he commanded [it].
CAL. I shall be sure
Of your good word; but I have kept it safe
From such as you.
MEL. Keep your ill temper in:
I speak no malice; had my brother kept it,
I should ha' said as much.
KING. You are not merry.—
Brother, drink wine.—Sit you all still.
<Calianax,
I cannot trust this; I have thrown out words
That would have fetched warm blood upon the cheeks
Of guilty men, and he is never moved;
He knows no such thing.
CAL. Impudence may scape,
When feeble virtue is accused.
KING. 'A must,
If he were guilty, feel an alteration
At this our whisper, whilst we point at him:

You see he does not.
CAL. Let him hang himself;
What care I what he does? This he did say.>
KING. Melantius, you can easily conceive
What I have meant; for men that are in fault [199
Can subtly apprehend when others aim
At what they do amiss: but I forgive
Freely before this man. Heaven do so too!
I will not touch thee, so much as with shame
Of telling it. Let it be so no more.
CAL. <Why, this is very fine!>
MEL. I cannot tell
What 'tis you mean; but I am apt enough [210
Rudely to thrust into an ignorant fault.
But let me know it. Happily[10] 'tis nought
But misconstruction; and, where I am clear,
I will not take forgiveness of the gods,
Much less of you.
KING. Nay, if you stand so stiff,
I shall call back my mercy.
MEL. I want smoothness, [220
To thank a man for pardoning of a crime
I never knew.
KING. Not to instruct your knowledge, but to show you
My ears are everywhere; you meant to kill me,
And get the fort, to scape.
MEL. Pardon me, sir;
My bluntness will be pardoned. You preserve [231
A race of idle people here about you,
Facers and talkers, to defame the worth
Of those that do things worthy. The man that uttered this
Had perished without food, be't who it will,
But for this arm, that fenced him from the foe; [239
And, if I thought you gave a faith to this,
The plainness of my nature would speak more.

10 haply.

Give me a pardon (for you ought to do't)
To kill him that spake this.
CAL. <Ay, that will be
The end of all; then I am fairly paid
For all my care and service.>
MEL. That old man,
Who calls me enemy, and of whom I [250
(Though I will never match my hate so low)
Have no good thought, would yet, I think, excuse me,
And swear he thought me wronged in this.
CAL. Who, I?
Thou shameless fellow! didst thou not speak to me
Of it thyself? [260
MEL. Oh, then it came from him!
CAL. From me! who should it come from but from me?
MEL. Nay, I believe your malice is enough;
But I ha' lost my anger.—Sir, I hope
You are well satisfied.
KING. Lysippus, cheer
Amintor and his lady. There's no sound
Comes from you; I will come and do't myself. [271
AMIN. You have done already, sir, for me, I thank you.
KING. Melantius, I do credit this from him,
How slight soe'er you make't.
MEL. 'Tis strange you should.
CAL. 'Tis strange 'a should believe an old man's word
That never lied in's life! [280
MEL. I talk not to thee.—
Shall the wild words of this distempered man,
Frantic with age and sorrow, make a breach
Betwixt your majesty and me? 'Twas wrong
To hearken to him; but to credit him,
As much at least as I have power to bear. [290
But pardon me—whilst I speak only truth,
I may commend myself—I have bestowed

My careless blood with you, and should be loth
To think an action that would make me lose
That and my thanks too. When I was a boy,
I thrust myself into my country's cause,
And did a deed that plucked five years from time
And styled me man then. And, for you, my King,
Your subjects all have fed by virtue of
My arm. This sword of mine hath ploughed the ground,
And reaped the fruit in peace;
And you yourself have lived at home in ease.
So terrible I grew, that, without swords,
My name hath fetched you conquest; and my heart
And limbs are still the same; my will as great
To do you service. Let me not be paid
With such a strange distrust.
KING. Melantius,
I held it great injustice to believe
Thine enemy, and did not; if I did,
I do not; let that satisfy.—What, struck
With sadness all? More wine!
CAL. <A few fine words
Have overthrown my truth. [*To* MELANTIUS.] Ah, th'art a villain!
MEL. Why, thou wert better let me have the fort:
Dotard, I will disgrace thee thus for ever;
There shall no credit lie upon thy words.
Think better, and deliver it.>
CAL. My liege,
He's at me now again to do it.—Speak;
Deny it, if thou canst.—Examine him
Whilst he is hot; for, if he cool again,
He will forswear it.
KING. This is lunacy,
I hope, Melantius.
MEL. He hath lost himself
Much since his daughter missed the happiness
My sister gained; and, though he call me foe,
I pity him.
CAL. Pity! A pox upon you!
MEL. Mark his disordered words: and, at the masque,
Diagoras knows, he raged and railed at me,
And called a lady "whore," so innocent
She understood him not. But it becomes
Both you and me too to forgive distraction:
Pardon him, as I do.
CAL. I'll not speak for thee,
For all thy cunning.—If you will be safe,
Chop off his head; for there was never known
So impudent a rascal.
KING. Some that love him,
Get him to bed. Why, pity should not let
Age make itself contemptible; we must be
All old. Have him away.
MEL. Calianax,
The king believes you; come, you shall go home,
And rest; you ha' done well. <You'll give it up,
When I have used you thus a month, I hope.>
CAL. Now, now, 'tis plain, sir; he does move me still.
He says, he knows I'll give him up the fort,
When he has used me thus a month. I am mad,
Am I not, still?
ALL. Ha, ha, ha!
CAL. I shall be mad indeed, if you do thus.
Why should you trust a sturdy fellow there
That has no virtue in him (all's in his sword)
Before me? Do but take his weapons from him,
And he's an ass; and I am a very fool,
Both with 'em [11] and without 'em, as you use me.
ALL. Ha, ha, ha!
KING. 'Tis well, Calianax: but, if you use

[11] B. him.

This once again, I shall entreat some other
To see your offices be well discharged.—
Be merry, gentlemen.—It grows somewhat late.
Amintor, thou wouldst be a-bed again.
AMIN. Yes, sir.
KING. And you, Evadne.—Let me take
Thee in my arms, Melantius, and believe
Thou art, as thou deservest to be, my friend
Still and for ever.—Good Calianax,
Sleep soundly; it will bring thee to thyself. [*Exeunt all except* MELANTIUS *and* CALIANAX.
CAL. Sleep soundly! I sleep soundly now, I hope;
I could not be thus else.—How dar'st thou stay
Alone with me, knowing how thou hast used me?
MEL. You cannot blast me with your tongue, and that's
The strongest part you have about you.
CAL. I
Do look for some great punishment for this;
For I begin to forget all my hate,
And take't unkindly that mine enemy
Should use me so extraordinarily scurvily.
MEL. I shall melt too, if you begin to take
Unkindnesses: I never meant you hurt.
CAL. Thou'lt anger me again. Thou wretched rogue,
Meant me no hurt! Disgrace me with the King!
Lose all my offices! This is no hurt,
Is it? I prithee, what dost thou call hurt?
MEL. To poison men, because they love me not;
To call the credit of men's wives in question;
To murder children betwixt me and land:
This is all hurt.
CAL. All this thou think'st is sport;
For mine is worse. But use thy will with me;
For, betwixt grief and anger, I could cry.
MEL. Be wise, then, and be safe; thou may'st revenge—
CAL. Ay, o' the King; I would revenge of thee.
MEL. That you must plot yourself.
CAL. I am a fine plotter.
MEL. The short is, I will hold thee with the King
In this perplexity, till peevishness
And thy disgrace have laid thee in thy grave;
But, if thou wilt deliver up the fort,
I'll take thy trembling body in my arms
And bear thee over dangers. Thou shalt hold
Thy wonted state.
CAL. If I should tell the King,
Canst thou deny't again?
MEL. Try, and believe.
CAL. Nay, then, thou canst bring any thing about.
Melantius, thou shalt have the fort.
MEL. Why, well.
Here let our hate be buried; and this hand
Shall right us both. Give me thy aged breast
To compass.
CAL. Nay, I do not love thee yet;
I cannot well endure to look on thee;
And, if I thought it were a courtesy,
Thou shouldst not have it. But I am disgraced;
My offices are to be ta'en away;
And, if I did but hold this fort a day,
I do believe the King would take it from me,
And give it thee, things are so strangely carried.
Ne'er thank me for't; but yet the King shall know
There was some such thing in't I told him of,
And that I was an honest man.
MEL. He'll buy
That knowledge very dearly.

Re-enter DIPHILUS.

Diphilus,
What news with thee?
DIPH. This were a night indeed

To do it in: the King hath sent for her.
MEL. She shall perform it then.—Go, Diphilus,
And take from this good man, my worthy friend,
The fort; he'll give it thee.
DIPH. Ha' you got that?
CAL. Art thou of the same breed? Canst thou deny
This to the King too?
DIPH. With a confidence
As great as his.
CAL. Faith, like enough.
MEL. Away, and use him kindly.
CAL. Touch not me;
I hate the whole strain. If thou follow me
A great way off, I'll give thee up the fort;
And hang yourselves.
MEL. Begone.
DIPH. <He's finely wrought.>
[*Exeunt* CALIANAX *and* DIPHILUS.
MEL. This is a night, spite of astronomers,[12]
To do the deed in. I will wash the stain
That rests upon our house off with his blood.

Re-enter AMINTOR.

AMIN. Melantius, now assist me: if thou be'st
That which thou say'st, assist me. I have lost
All my distempers, and have found a rage
So pleasing! Help me.
MEL. <Who can see him thus,
And not swear vengeance?> What's the matter, friend?
AMIN., *drawing his sword.* Out with thy sword; and, hand in hand with me,
Rush to the chamber of this hated King,
And sink him with the weight of all his sins
To hell for ever.
MEL. 'Twere a rash attempt,
Not to be done with safety. Let your reason
Plot your revenge, and not your passiön.
AMIN. If thou refusest me in these extremes,
Thou art no friend. He sent for her to me;
By Heaven, to me, myself! and, I must tell you,
I love her as a stranger: there is worth
In that vild woman, worthy things, Melantius;
And she repents. I'll do't myself alone,
Though I be slain. Farewell.
MEL. <He'll overthrow
My whole design with madness.> Amintor,
Think what thou dost: I dare as much as valor;
But 'tis the King, the King, the King, Amintor,
With whom thou fightest! <I know he is honest;[13]
And this will work with him.>
AMIN., *letting fall his sword.* I cannot tell
What thou hast said: but thou hast charmed my sword
Out of my hand, and left me shaking here,
Defenceless.
MEL. I will take it up for thee. [*Picks the sword up, and hands it to* AMINTOR.
AMIN. What a wild beast is uncollected[14] man!
The thing that we call honor bears us all
Headlong unto sin, and yet itself is nothing.
MEL. Alas, how variable are thy thoughts!
AMIN. Just like my fortunes. I was run to that
I purposed to have chid thee for. Some plot,
I did distrust, thou hadst against the King,
By that old fellow's carriage. But take heed;
There's not the least limb growing to a King
But carries thunder in it.

[12] astrologers.
[13] loyal.
[14] uncontrolled.

MEL. I have none
Against him.
AMIN. Why, come, then; and still remember
We may not think revenge. [599
MEL. I will remember. [*Exeunt.*

ACT FIVE

SCENE I (F, B) [1]

It is the KING'S *bedchamber, the same night. The* KING *is in bed on the rear stage, behind curtains. A* GENTLEMAN OF THE BEDCHAMBER *is alone.* EVADNE *enters.*

EVAD. Sir, is the King a-bed?
GENT. Madam, an hour ago.
EVAD. Give me the key, then, and let none be near;
'Tis the King's pleasure. [10
GENT. I understand you, madam; would 'twere mine! [*Hands her a key.*]
I must not wish good rest unto your ladyship.
EVAD. You talk, you talk.
GENT. 'Tis all I dare do, madam; but the King
Will wake, and then, methinks— [19
EVAD. Saving your imagination, pray, good night, sir.
GENT. A good night be it, then, and a long one, madam.
I am gone. [*Exit.*
EVAD. The night grows horrible; and all about me
Like my black purpose. Oh, the conscience
Of a lost virtue, whither wilt thou pull me? [30
To what things dismal as the depth of hell
Wilt thou provoke me? Let no woman dare
From this hour be disloyal, if her heart be flesh,
If she have blood and can fear. 'Tis a daring
Above that desperate fool's that left his peace, [40
And went to sea to fight: 'tis so many sins,
An age cannot repent 'em; and so great,
The gods want mercy for. Yet I must through 'em:
I have begun a slaughter on my honor;
And I must end it there. [*Draws the curtains.*] 'A sleeps. O God!
Why give you peace to this untemperate beast, [50
That hath so long transgressed you? I must kill him;
And I will do it bravely: the mere joy
Tells me, I merit in it. Yet I must not
Thus tamely do it as he sleeps—that were
To rock him to another world: my vengeance
Shall take him waking, and then lay before him [60
The number of his wrongs and punishments.
I'll shape his sins like Furies, till I waken
His evil angel, his sick conscience,
And then I'll strike him dead.—King, by your leave; [*Ties his arms to the bed.*
I dare not trust your strength; your grace and I [70
Must grapple upon even terms no more.—
So, if he rail me not from my resolution,
I shall be strong enough.—My lord the King!
My lord!—'A sleeps, as if he meant to wake
No more.—My lord!—Is he not dead already?—
Sir! My lord! [80
KING. Who's that?
EVAD. Oh, you sleep soundly, sir.
KING. My dear Evadne,
I have been dreaming of thee; come to bed.
EVAD. I am come at length, sir; but how welcome?
KING. What pretty new device is this, Evadne?
What, do you tie me to you? By my love, [91

[1] Fletcher's part extends to Evadne's exit, the remainder probably being Beaumont's.

This is a quaint one. Come, my dear, and kiss me;
I'll be thy Mars; to bed, my queen of love.
Let us be caught together, that the gods
May see and envy our embraces.
EVAD. Stay, sir, stay;
You are too hot, and I have brought you physic
To temper your high veins.
KING. Prithee, to bed, then; let me take it warm;
There thou shalt know the state of my body better.
EVAD. I know you have a surfeited foul body;
And you must bleed. [*Produces a dagger.*
KING. "Bleed"!
EVAD. Ay, you shall bleed. Lie still; and, if the devil,
Your lust, will give you leave, repent. This steel
Comes to redeem the honor that you stole,
King, my fair name; which nothing but thy death
Can answer to the world.
KING. How's this, Evadne?
EVAD. I am not she; nor bear I in this breast
So much cold spirit to be called a woman;
I am a tiger; I am any thing
That knows not pity. Stir not! If thou dost,
I'll take thee unprepared, thy fears upon thee,
That make thy sins look double, and so send thee
(By my revenge, I will!) to look those torments
Prepared for such black souls.
KING. Thou dost not mean this; 'tis impossible;
Thou art too sweet and gentle.
EVAD. No, I am not:
I am as foul as thou art, and can number
As many such hells here. I was once fair,
Once I was lovely; not a blowing rose
More chastely sweet, till thou, thou, thou, foul canker,
(Stir not!) didst poison me. I was a world of virtue,
Till your cursed court and you (Hell bless you for't!)
With your temptations on temptatiöns
Made me give up mine honor; for which King,
I am come to kill thee.
KING. No!
EVAD. I am.
KING. Thou art not!
I prithee speak not these things. Thou art gentle,
And wert not meant thus rugged.
EVAD. Peace, and hear me.
Stir nothing but your tongue, and that for mercy
To those above us; by whose lights I vow,
Those blessed fires[2] that shot to see our sin,
If thy hot soul had substance with thy blood,
I would kill that too; which, being past my steel,
My tongue shall reach. Thou art a shameless villain;
A thing out of the overcharge of nature
Sent, like a thick cloud, to disperse a plague
Upon weak, catching[3] women; such a tyrant
That for his lust would sell away his subjects,
Ay, all his Heaven hereafter!
KING. Hear, Evadne,
Thou soul of sweetness, hear! I am thy King.
EVAD. Thou art my shame! Lie still; there's none about you,
Within your cries; all promises of safety
Are but deluding dreams. Thus, thus, thou foul man,
Thus I begin my vengeance! [*Stabs him.*
KING. Hold, Evadne!
I do command thee hold.
EVAD. I do not mean, sir,
To part so fairly with you; we must change

[2] shooting stars. [3] easily infected.

More of these love-tricks yet.
KING. What bloody villain
Provoked thee to this murder?
EVAD. Thou, thou monster!
KING. Oh!
EVAD. Thou kept'st me brave [4] at court, and whored me, King; [200
Then married me to a young noble gentleman,
And whored me still.
KING. Evadne, pity me!
EVAD. Hell take me, then! This for my lord Amintor!
This for my noble brother! And this stroke
For the most wronged of women! [209
KING. Oh! I die. [*Dies.*
EVAD. Die all our faults together! I forgive thee. [*Exit.*

Enter two GENTLEMEN OF THE BEDCHAMBER.

1 GENT. Come, now she's gone, let's enter; the King expects it, and will be angry.
2 GENT. 'Tis a fine wench; we'll have a snap at her one of these nights, as she goes from him. [220
1 GENT. Content. How quickly he had done with her! I see kings can do no more that way than other mortal people.
2 GENT. How fast he is! I cannot hear him breathe.
1 GENT. Either the tapers give a feeble light
Or he looks very pale.
2 GENT. And so he does:
Pray Heaven he be well! let's look.—Alas! [231
He's stiff, wounded, and dead! Treason, treason!
1 GENT. Run forth and call.
2 GENT., *calling.* Treason, treason! [*Exit.*
1 GENT. This will be laid on us:
Who can believe a woman could do this?

Enter CLEON *and* LYSIPPUS.

CLEON. How now! where's the traitor?
1 GENT. Fled, fled away; but there [241
her woeful act
Lies still.
CLEON. *Her* act? a woman!
LYS. Where's the body?
1 GENT. There.
LYS. Farewell, thou worthy man! There were two bonds
That tied our loves, a brother and a king, [250
The least of which might fetch a flood of tears;
But, such the misery of greatness is,
They have no time to mourn; then, pardon me!
Sirs, which way went she?

Enter STRATO.

STRA. Never follow her;
For she, alas! was but the instrument.
News is now brought in that Melantius
Has got the fort, and stands upon [261
the wall,
And with a loud voice calls those few that pass
At this dead time of night, delivering
The innocence of this act.
LYS. Gentlemen,
I am your King.
STRA. We do acknowledge it.
LYS. I would I were not! Follow, all; for this [271
Must have a sudden stop. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II (F)

MELANTIUS, DIPHILUS, *and* CALIANAX *are seen on the walls of the fort, the same night.*

MEL. If the dull people can believe I am armed
(Be constant, Diphilus), now we have time
Either to bring our banished honors home
Or create new ones in our ends. [10
DIPH. I fear not;
My spirit lies not that way.—Courage, Calianax!
CAL. Would I had any! you should quickly know it.
MEL. Speak to the people; thou art eloquent.

[4] well dressed.

CAL. 'Tis a fine eloquence to come to the gallows:
You were born to be my end; the devil take you!
Now must I hang for company. 'Tis strange
I should be old and neither wise nor valiant.

LYSIPPUS, DIAGORAS, CLEON, STRATO, *and Guard enter below.*

LYS. See where he stands, as boldly confident
As if he had his full command about him.
STRA. He looks as if he had the better cause, sir;
Under your gracious pardon, let me speak it!
Though he be mighty-spirited, and forward
To all great things, to all things of that danger
Worse men shake at the telling of, yet certainly
I do believe him noble, and this action
Rather pulled on than sought: his mind was ever
As worthy as his hand.
LYS. 'Tis my fear, too.
Heaven forgive all!—Summon him, Lord Cleon.
CLEON, *calling.* Ho, from the walls there!
MEL. Worthy Cleon, welcome:
We could have wished you here, lord; you are honest.
CAL. <Well, thou art as flattering a knave, though
I dare not tell thee so—>
LYS. Melantius!
MEL. Sir?
LYS. I am sorry that we meet thus; our old love
Never required such distance. Pray to Heaven,
You have not left yourself, and sought this safety
More out of fear than honor! You have lost
A noble master, which your faith, Melantius,
Some think, might have preserved: yet you know best.
CAL. <When time was, I was mad. Some that dares fight,
I hope, will pay this rascal.>
MEL. Royal young man, those tears look lovely on thee:
Had they been shed for a deserving one,
They had been lasting monuments. Thy brother,
Whilst he was good, I called him King, and served him
With that strong faith, that most unwearied valor,
Pulled people from the farthest sun to seek him,
And beg his friendship. I was then his soldier;
But, since his hot pride drew him to disgrace me,
And brand my noble actions with his lust
(That never-cured dishonor of my sister,
Base stain of whore, and, which is worse, the joy
To make it still so), like myself, thus I
Have flung him off with my allegiance,
And stand here, mine own justice, to revenge
What I have suffered in him, and this old man
Wronged almost to lunacy.
CAL. Who, I?
You would draw me in. I have had no wrong;
I do disclaim ye all.
MEL. The short is this:
'Tis no ambition to lift up myself
Urgeth me thus; I do desire again
To be a subject, so I may be free:
If not, I know my strength, and will unbuild
This goodly town. Be speedy and be wise
In a reply.
STRA., *to* LYSIPPUS. Be sudden, sir, to tie
All up again. What's done is past recall,
And past you to revenge; and there are thousands
That wait for such a troubled hour as this.

Throw him the blank.
LYS. Melantius, write in that
Thy choice: my seal is at it. [*Throws a paper to* MELANTIUS.
MEL. It was our honors drew us to this act,
Not gain; and we will only work our pardons.
CAL. Put my name in too.
DIPH. You disclaimed us all
But now, Calianax.
CAL. That's all one;
I'll not be hanged hereafter by a trick:
I'll have it in.
MEL. You shall, you shall.—
Come to the back gate, and we'll call you King,
And give you up the fort.
LYS. Away, away. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III (B)

The same night, ASPATIA, *dressed to represent her soldier brother (referred to in* I 1) *and with painted scars on her face, enters an anteroom in* AMINTOR'S *apartments in the palace.*

ASP. This is my fatal hour. Heaven may forgive
My rash attempt, that causelessly hath laid
Griefs on me that will never let me rest,
And put a woman's heart into my breast.
It is more honor for you that I die;
For she that can endure the misery
That I have on me and be patient too
May live and laugh at all that you can do.

Enter SERVANT.

God save you, sir!
SER. And you, sir! What's your business?
ASP. With you, sir, now; to do me the fair office
To help me to your lord.
SER. What, would you serve him?
ASP. I'll do him any service; but, to haste,
For my affairs are earnest; I desire
To speak with him.
SER. Sir, because you are in such haste, I would
Be loth delay you longer: you can not.
ASP. It shall become you, though, to tell your lord.
SER. Sir, he will speak with nobody;
But in particular, I have in charge,
About no weighty matters.
ASP. This is most strange.
Art thou gold-proof? There's for thee; help me to him. [*Gives money.*
SER. Pray be not angry, sir: I'll do my best. [*Exit.*
ASP. How stubbornly this fellow answered me!
There is a vile dishonest trick in man
More than in woman. All the men I meet
Appeär thus to me; are harsh and rude,
And have a subtilty in every thing,
Which love could never know; but we fond women
Harbor the easiest and the smoothest thoughts,
And think all shall go so. It is unjust
That men and women should be matched together.

Enter, from the inner room, AMINTOR *and* SERVANT.

AMIN. Where is he?
SER. There, my lord.
AMIN. What would you, sir?
ASP. Please it your lordship to command your man
Out of the room, I shall deliver things
Worthy your hearing.
AMIN. Leave us. [*Exit* SERVANT.
ASP. <Oh, that that shape
Should bury falsehold in it!>
AMIN. Now your will, sir.
ASP. When you know me, my lord, you needs must guess
My business; and I am not hard to know;
For, till the chance of war marked this smooth face
With these few blemishes, people would call me
My sister's picture, and her mine. In short,

I am brother to the wronged Aspatia.
AMIN. The wronged Aspatia! Would thou wert so too
Unto the wronged Amintor! Let me kiss
That hand of thine, in honor that I bear
Unto the wronged Aspatia. Here I stand
That did it. Would he could not! Gentle youth,
Leave me; for there is something in thy looks
That calls my sins in a most hideous form
Into my mind; and I have grief enough,
Without thy help.
ASP. I would I could with credit!
Since I was twelve years old, I had not seen
My sister till this hour I now arrived:
She sent for me to see her marriäge—
A woful one! but they that are above
Have ends in everything. She used few words,
But yet enough to make me understand
The baseness of the injuries you did her.
That little training I have had is war:
I may behave myself rudely in peace;
I would not, though. I shall not need to tell you
I am but young, and would be loth to lose
Honor, that is not easily gained again.
Fairly I mean to deal: the age is strict
For single combats; and we shall be stopped,
If it be published. If you like your sword,
Use it; if mine appear a better to you,
Change; for the ground is this, and this the time
To end our difference. [*Draws.*
AMIN. Charitable youth,
If thou be'st such, think not I will maintain
So strange a wrong: and, for thy sister's sake,
Know, that I could not think that desperate thing
I durst not do; yet, to enjoy this world,
I would not see her; for, beholding thee,
I am I know not what. If I have aught
That may content thee, take it, and begone;
For death is not so terrible as thou;
Thine eyes shoot guilt into me.
ASP. Thus, she swore,
Thou wouldst behave thyself, and give me words
That would fetch tears into my eyes; and so
Thou dost indeed. But yet she bade me watch
Lest I were cozened, and be sure to fight
Ere I returned.
AMIN. That must not be with me.
For her I'll die directly; but against her
Will never hazard it.
ASP. You must be urged.
I do not deal uncivilly with those
That dare to fight; but such a one as you
Must be used thus. [*She strikes him.*
AMIN. I prithee, youth, take heed.
Thy sister is a thing to me so much
Above mine honor, that I can endure
All this—Good gods! a blow I can endure—
But stay not, lest thou draw a timeless[5] death
Upon thyself.
ASP. Thou art some prating fellow;
One that hath studied out a trick to talk,
And move soft-hearted people. To be kicked, [*She kicks him.*
Thus to be kicked. <Why should he be so slow
In giving me my death?>
AMIN. A man can bear
No more, and keep his flesh. Forgive me, then!
I would endure yet, if I could. Now show [*Draws.*
The spirit thou pretendest, and understand
Thou hast no hour to live.
[*They fight;* ASPATIA *is wounded.*
What dost thou mean?
Thou canst not fight: the blows thou mak'st at me
Are quite besides; and those I offer at thee,
Thou spread'st thine arms, and tak'st upon thy breast,

[5] untimely.

Alas, defenceless!
ASP. I have got enough,
And my desire. There is no place so fit
For me to die as here. [*Falls.*

Enter EVADNE, *her hands bloody, with a dagger.*

EVAD. Amintor, I am loaden with events,
That fly to make thee happy; I have joys,
That in a moment can call back thy wrongs,
And settle thee in thy free state again.
It is Evadne still that follows thee,
But not her mischiefs.
AMIN. Thou canst not fool me to believe again;
But thou hast looks and things so full of news,
That I am stayed.
EVAD. Noble Amintor, put off thy amaze,
Let thine eyes loose, and speak. Am I not fair?
Looks not Evadne beauteous with these rites now?
Were those hours half so lovely in thine eyes
When our hands met before the holy man?
I was too foul within to look fair then.
Since I knew ill, I was not free till now.
AMIN. There is presage of some important thing
About thee, which, it seems, thy tongue hath lost.
Thy hands are bloody, and thou hast a knife.
EVAD. In this consists thy happiness and mine.
Joy to Amintor! for the King is dead.
AMIN. Those have most power to hurt us, that we love;
We lay our sleeping lives within their arms.
Why, thou hast raised up mischief to his height,
And found one to out-name thy other faults;
Thou hast no intermission of thy sins
But all thy life is a continued ill.
Black is thy color now, disease thy nature.
Joy to Amintor! Thou hast touched a life,
The very name of which had power to chain
Up all my rage and calm my wildest wrongs.
EVAD. 'Tis done; and, since I could not find a way
To meet thy love so clear as through his life,
I cannot now repent it.
AMIN. Couldst thou procure the gods to speak to me,
To bid me love this woman and forgive,
I think I should fall out with them. Behold,
Here lies a youth whose wounds bleed in my breast,
Sent by a violent fate to fetch his death
From my slow hand! And, to augment my woe,
You now are present, stained with a king's blood
Violently shed. This keeps night here,
And throws an unknown wilderness[6] about me.
ASP. Oh, oh, oh!
AMIN. No more; pursue me not.
EVAD. Forgive me, then,
And take me to thy bed: we may not part. [*Kneels.*
AMIN. Forbear, be wise, and let my rage go this way.
EVAD. 'Tis you that I would stay, not it.
AMIN. Take heed;
It will return with me.
EVAD. If it must be,
I shall not fear to meet it. Take me home.
AMIN. Thou monster of cruelty, forbear!
EVAD. For Heaven's sake, look more calm! Thine eyes are sharper
Than thou canst make thy sword.
AMIN. Away, away!
Thy knees are more to me than violence.

[6] wildness.

I am worse than sick to see knees [280
follow me
For that I must not grant. For God's
sake, stand.
EVAD. Receive me, then.
AMIN. I dare not stay thy language.
In midst of all my anger and my grief,
Thou dost awake something that troubles
me,
And says I loved thee once. I dare not
stay; [290
There is no end of woman's reasoning.
[*Leaves her.*
EVAD., *rising*. Amintor, thou shalt love
me now again.
Go; I am calm. Farewell, and peace for
ever!
Evadne, whom thou hat'st, will die for
thee. [*Stabs herself.*
AMIN., *returning*. I have a little human
nature yet, [300
That's left for thee, that bids me stay
thy hand.
EVAD. Thy hand was welcome, but it
came too late.
Oh, I am lost! the heavy sleep makes
haste. [*She dies.*
ASP. Oh, oh, oh!
AMIN. This earth of mine doth
tremble, and I feel [309
A stark, affrighted motion in my blood.
My soul grows weary of her house, and I
All over am a trouble to myself.
There is some hidden power in these dead
things,
That calls my flesh unto 'em; I am cold.
Be resolute and bear 'em company.
There's something yet which I am loth
to leave:
There's man enough in me to meet the
fears [320
That death can bring; and yet would it
were done!
I can find nothing in the whole dis-
course
Of death I durst not meet the boldest
way;
Yet still, betwixt the reason and the act,
The wrong I to Aspatia did stands up;
I have not such another fault to answer.
Though she may justly arm herself with
scorn [331
And hate of me, my soul will part less
troubled,
When I have paid to her in tears my
sorrow.
I will not leave this act unsatisfied,
If all that's left in me can answer it.
ASP. Was it a dream? There stands
Amintor still;
Or I dream still. [340
AMIN. How dost thou? speak; receive
my love and help.
Thy blood climbs up to his old place
again;
There's hope of thy recovery.
ASP. Did you not name Aspatiä?
AMIN. I did.
ASP. And talked of tears and sorrow
unto her?
AMIN. 'Tis true; and, till these happy
signs in thee [351
Did stay my course, 'twas thither I was
going.
ASP. Thou art there already; and these
wounds are hers.
Those threats I brought with me sought
not revenge,
But came to fetch this blessing from thy
hand:
I am Aspatia yet. [360
AMIN. Dare my soul ever look abroad
again?
ASP. I shall sure live, Amintor; I am
well;
A kind of healthful joy wanders within
me.
AMIN. The world wants lives[7] to ex-
cuse thy loss.
Come, let me bear thee to some place of
help. [370
ASP. Amintor, thou must stay; I must
rest here;
My strength begins to disobey my will.
How dost thou, my best soul? I would
fain live
Now, if I could. Wouldst thou have
loved me, then?
AMIN. Alas,

[7] B, lines.

All that I am's not worth a hair from thee! [380
Asp. Give me thy hand; mine hands grope up and down,
And cannot find thee; I am wondrous sick.
Have I thy hand, Amintor?
Amin. Thou greatest blessing of the world, thou hast.
Asp. I do believe thee better than my sense.
Oh, I must go! farewell! [*Dies.* [390
Amin. She swoons.—Aspatia!—[*Calling.*] Help! for God's sake, water,
Such as may chain life ever to this frame!—
Aspatia, speak!—What, no help yet? I fool!
I'll chafe her temples. Yet there's nothing stirs.
Some hidden power tell her Amintor calls,
And let her answer me!—Aspatia, speak!— [401
I have heard, if there be any life, but bow
The body thus, and it will show itself.—
Oh, she is gone!—I will not leave her yet.
Since out of justice we must challenge nothing,
I'll call it mercy, if you'll pity me,
You heavenly powers, and lend for[8] [410 some few years
The blessed soul to this fair seat again!—
No comfort comes; the gods deny me too.
I'll bow the body once again.—Aspatia!—
The soul is fled for ever; and I wrong
Myself, so long to lose her company.
Must I talk now? Here's to be with thee, love! [*Stabs himself.*

Re-enter Servant. [419

Ser. This is a great grace to my lord, to have the new king come to him. I must tell him he is ent'ring.—Oh, God!—[*Calling.*] Help, help!

Enter Lysippus, Melantius, Calianax, Cleon, Diphilus, *and* Strato.

Lys. Where's Amintor?
Stra. Oh, there, there!
Lys. How strange is this!
Cal. What should we do here? [429
Mel. These deaths are such acquainted things with me,
That yet my heart dissolves not. May I stand
Stiff here for ever!—Eyes, call up your tears!
This is Amintor. Heart (he was my friend),
Melt! now it flows.—Amintor, give a word
To call me to thee. [440
Amin. Oh!
Mel. Melantius calls his friend Amintor. Oh,
Thy arms are kinder to me than thy tongue!
Speak, speak!
Amin. What?
Mel. That little word was worth all the sounds
That ever I shall hear again. [450
Diph. Oh, brother,
Here lies your sister slain! You lose yourself
In sorrow there.
Mel. Why, Diphilus, it is
A thing to laugh at, in respect of this.
Here was my sister, father, brother, son;
All that I had.—Speak once again; what youth
Lies slain there by thee? [460
Amin. 'Tis Aspatia.
My last is said. Let me give up my soul
Into thy bosom. [*Dies.*
Cal. What's that? What's that? Aspatia!
Mel. I never did
Repent the greatness of my heart till now;
It will not burst at need. [469
Cal. My daughter dead here too! And you have all fine new tricks to grieve; but I ne'er knew any but direct crying.
Mel. I am a prattler: but no more.
[*Offers to stab himself.*
Diph. Hold, brother!
Lys. Stop him.
Diph. Fie, how unmanly was this offer in you!

[8] B, forth.

Does this become our strain?

CAL. I know not what the matter [480 is, but I am grown very kind, and am friends with you all now. You have given me that among you will kill me quickly; but I'll go home, and live as long as I can. [*Exit.*

MEL. His spirit is but poor that can be kept
From death for want of weapons.
Is not my hands a weapon sharp enough
To stop my breath? or, if you tie down those, [491
I vow, Amintor, I will never eat,
Or drink, or sleep, or have to do with that
That may preserve life! This I swear to keep.

LYS. Look to him, though, and bear those bodies in.
May this a fair example be to me [499
To rule with temper[9]; for on lustful kings
Unlooked-for sudden deaths from God are sent;
But cursed is he that is their instrument.

[9] temperance.

CYMBELINE

BY

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

INTRODUCTION

The date of "Cymbeline" is far from being a matter of general agreement. Most scholars regard it as belonging in part to Shakespeare's very latest period; but many consider it as containing late interpolations; others, as containing much early work; and some, no doubt, as containing both. Some of the verse, indeed, would seem to be as late as any we have from Shakespeare's pen; but some leaves us guessing. The clearly late work makes the closest approximation now and then to the rhetorical and uninspired manner of Massinger, and then again rushes far beyond anything to which that somewhat pedestrian poet was capable of attaining. The external evidence leaves us in as much doubt as the internal; but it may be passed in review.

It has been urged that the play must date prior to 1607, because a passage in Barnes' "Devil's Charter," published that year, recalls it; but this seems unsafe ground to build on. Chalmers thought he saw a reference to the statute against profanity on the stage, and therefore dated it after May, 1606; but this reference also is dubious. The supposed extracts from Forman's Diary give an account of its production in 1610 or 1611; but, as these extracts come to us through Collier, they may well be regarded with suspicion till they are submitted to a careful examination, such as they have never yet apparently been subjected to. Until the genuineness of those extracts has been proved, this evidence may be set aside, though it is the usual basis for a dating of 1609 or 1610. Because one of its two sources is Holinshed's "Chronicles," on which Shakespeare drew for "Lear" and "Macbeth," it has been suggested that it must have been compacted at about the same time; but this argument does not greatly impress. The story of Imogen and Iachimo is drawn from the "Decamerone" of Boccaccio, and is not known to have been Englished in Shakespeare's time. "Westward for Smelts," which gives a version of it, was published in 1620; and, even if there was, as has been stated, an edition of 1603, its variations from Shakespeare's story are such that the direct source must be sought elsewhere. A singular circumstance which has been pointed out is that Autolycus in "The Winter's Tale" passes upon the Clown a very similar sentence to that which the Sultan, in Boccaccio's novel, passes upon the prototype of Iachimo. This may be held to indicate a nearness in the composition of these two plays; but, as the date of "The

Winter's Tale" is also doubtful, we are not helped thereby very materially. It may further be added that the two plays present much the same merits and deficiencies. Both have, apparently, been greatly influenced by Beaumont and Fletcher's romances, and probably not more than a twelvemonth separates them. To take the year of the production of "Cymbeline" to be 1611 will probably not be very far wrong.

Whether the play, as it stands, is wholly Shakespeare's is a matter of doubt. Many critics hold that all the vision and scroll matter in the last two scenes cannot be his, and the first half of the vision warrants such scepticism; but from the descent of Jupiter there is more than one sign of his presence; and we are not justified in declaring all that follows to be spurious for no other reason than that it does Shakespeare little credit. But these are not the only parts that are doubtful. In IV 2 there is rhyme which it is hard to accept as coming from Shakespeare towards the end of his career. One may accept it as such, with surprise, or one may believe it to be a remnant of an early version, or one may, though with less warrant, consider it as proof of the interposition of another hand. And, finally, there is in III 3 what is surely the worst soliloquy in all the plays of the folio. It is so shocking that it is hard to accept it as the work of the master dramatist; yet there is really no ground for depriving him of the dishonor of it. In short, much as one would like to declare this soliloquy and the first part of the vision non-Shakespearean, one is not justified in doing so. They may show Shakespeare at his worst or very near it; but, being human (a fact that some of his worshippers forget), he was not incapable of doing bad work on occasion.

The style in many parts of the play differs in certain respects from that of other Shakespearean plays. The movement is often staccato, in the manner of Marston, the verse being choppy and disjointed, the result partly of elision carried to excess, so that in I 1 we have "Are you past grace and obedience?" cut down to "Past grace? obedience?" For a late play, again, there is a remarkable crudeness in the handling. If, in the opening scene, the author wished to tell the audience that the King had married a widow, he might surely have done it in some more credible manner than that which he has chosen; and equally crude are the means taken in I 5 to let the audience know what Cornelius is about. It is amazing to note that, in contradiction to the earliness of the technique here, the style is late. Dramatically, it has the fault of robbing us of all suspense.

There are certain circumstances that may perhaps indicate revision or perhaps nothing more than carelessness. The muteness of the Dutch-

man and the Spaniard on the occasion of their only appearance is a case in point. Another is the amazement of Imogen at seeing Iachimo with the ring in the final scene. She had been with him before, in V 4, without noticing it. Most remarkable is the gross inconsistency in the presentation of Cloten. The First Gentleman, in I 1, speaks of him as "a thing too bad for bad report." One might expect from that judgment of him a villain of the deepest dye; but, when he appears in the next scene and in II 1, it is as an "ass" and a "puppy," as the Second Lord describes him. In the words of this individual, of whose comments the reader gets heartily tired, Cloten "cannot take two from twenty, for his heart, and leave eighteen." To Pisanio also, in III 5, he is a "fool"; but in III 1 he is shown as quite manly; and in IV 3 we have Cymbeline wanting him in a crisis, as "so needful for this present." That gives a third view of him, as a wise counsellor. To Imogen, in III 4, he appears a "harsh, noble, simple nothing," but, in IV 2, an "irregulous devil." In that same scene he is to Belarius "fell" and possessed of a humor that is "nothing but mutation . . . from one bad thing to worse." From all this contradictory testimony as to his character it is impossible to construct any clear impression of the man; and there is not much less inconsistency in the presentation of him when he appears in person. It is hard to put under the one hat the fool of I 2, the patriot of III 1, and the brute of IV 1. If the play be wholly Shakespeare's, it seems most reasonable to believe that he revised it and greatly altered Cloten's part on revision.

It may be noted further that the doings of the three heroes are shown in V 3 and narrated in V 5—a fact which may be held to indicate revision. Also, in the closing scene, Iachimo's description of the circumstances of the making of the wager is inconsistent with the facts as previously shown to us. This is, in the eyes of Cowden Clarke, an example of Shakespeare's wonderful art: his object is either to impress upon us Iachimo's love of lying or to give the effect of the deficiencies of memory! It is extraordinary the lengths to which some scholars will go to prove that Shakespeare never erred. Ingleby is much more likely to be right in supposing that what is indicated is a difference in the time of writing the two accounts. The fact that in the folio the play is styled "The Tragedy of Cymbeline" also points towards a rewriting.

"Cymbeline" is as full of beauties as of faults; but the faults are overshadowed by the beauties. Imogen is one of the most delightful of Shakespeare's heroines, though it is not easy to think highly of her intelligence in so readily believing that Iachimo's advances had been made only to try her and in failing to realize that it could only be

from him that her husband obtained his suspicion. Iachimo is an inferior, but a less villainous, Iago. Had "Othello" been the later play, Iachimo would certainly have been regarded as a first sketch for the part of a crafty and unscrupulous Italian. The finale has met with some unfavorable criticism; but, whatever else may be said against it, it is undeniably interesting, though nothing could well be more unconvincing than Cymbeline's surrender to those whom he has vanquished.

CHARACTERS

CYMBELINE, *King of Britain.*

CLOTEN, *Son to the Queen by a former Husband.*

POSTHUMUS LEONATUS, *Husband to Imogen.*

BELARIUS, *a banished Lord, disguised under the name of Morgan.*

GUIDERIUS, ARVIRAGUS } *Sons to Cymbeline, disguised under the names of Polydore and Cadwal, supposed Sons to Morgan.*

PHILARIO, *Friend to Posthumus*; IACHIMO, *Friend to Philario* } *Italians.*

A FRENCH GENTLEMAN, *Friend to Philario.*

CAIUS LUCIUS, *General of the Roman Forces.*

A ROMAN CAPTAIN.

TWO BRITISH CAPTAINS.

PISANIO, *Servant to Posthumus.*

CORNELIUS, *a Physician.*

TWO LORDS *of Cymbeline's Court.*

TWO GENTLEMEN *of the same.*

TWO GAOLERS.

QUEEN, *Wife to Cymbeline.*

IMOGEN, *Daughter to Cymbeline by a former Queen.*

HELEN, *a Lady attending on Imogen.*

Lords, Ladies, Roman Senators, Tribunes, a Dutch Gentleman, a Spanish Gentleman, a Soothsayer, Musicians, Officers, Captains, Soldiers, Messengers, and other Attendants, Apparitions.

PLACE: *Britain and Italy.*

TIME: *The latter part of the 1st century B.C.*

ACT ONE

Scene I

In the garden of Cymbeline's *palace, a* Gentleman *of his court tells another* Gentleman, *evidently a stranger, the state of affairs in Britain, a sensation having been caused in the court by the recent marriage of* Imogen *to* Posthumus, *in defiance of the wishes of her father and her stepmother.*

1 Gent. You do not meet a man but frowns; our bloods[1] [10
No more obey the heavens than our courtiers'
Still seem as does the king's.
2 Gent. But what's the matter?
1 Gent. His daughter, and the heir of's kingdom, whom
He purposed to his wife's sole son—a widow
That late he married—hath referred herself [20
Unto a poor but worthy gentleman. She's wedded;
Her husband banished; she imprisoned: all
Is outward sorrow, though I think the king
Be touched at very heart.
2 Gent. None but the king?
1 Gent. He that hath lost her, too; so is the queen, [30
That most desired the match; but not a courtier,
Although they wear their faces to the bent
Of the king's looks, hath a heart that is not
Glad at the thing they scowl at.
2 Gent. And why so?
1 Gent. He that hath missed the princess is a thing [40
Too bad for bad report; and he that hath her—
I mean that married her, alack! good man!
And therefore banished—is a creature such
As, to seek through the regions of the earth
For one his like, there would be something failing [50
In him that should compare. I do not think
So fair an outward and such stuff within
Endows a man but he.
2 Gent. You speak him far.
1 Gent. I do extend him, sir, within himself,
Crush him together rather than unfold
His measure duly. [59
2 Gent. What's his name and birth?
1 Gent. I cannot delve him to the root: his father
Was called Sicilius, who did join his honor
Against the Romans with Cassibelan,
But had his titles by Tenantius, whom
He served with glory and admired success,
So gained the sur-addition "Leonatus";
And had, besides this gentleman in question, [70
Two other sons, who in the wars o' th' time
Died with their swords in hand; for which their father—
Then old and fond of issue—took such sorrow
That he quit being, and his gentle lady,
Big of this gentleman, our theme, deceased
As he was born. The king, he takes the babe [81
To his protection; calls him Posthumus Leonatus;

[1] moods.

Breeds him and makes him of his bed-chamber,
Puts to him all the learnings that his time
Could make him the receiver of; which he took,
As we do air, fast as 'twas ministered, [90
And in's spring became a harvest; lived in court—
Which rare it is to do—most praised, most loved,
A sample to the youngest, to th' more mature
A glass that feated[2] them, and to the graver
A child that guided dotards; to his mistress, [100
For whom he now is banished, her own price
Proclaims how she esteemed him and his virtue;
By her election may be truly read
What kind of man he is.
2 Gent. I honor him,
Even out of your report. But pray you, tell me,
Is she sole child to th' king? [110
1 Gent. His only child.
He had two sons—if this be worth your hearing,
Mark it—the eldest of them at three years old,
I' th' swathing clothes the other, from their nursery
Were stol'n; and to this hour no guess in knowledge
Which way they went. [120
2 Gent. How long is this ago?
1 Gent. Some twenty years.
2 Gent. That a king's children should be so conveyed,
So slackly guarded, and the search so slow,
That could not trace them!
1 Gent. Howsoe'er 'tis strange,
Or that the negligence may well be laughed at, [130
Yet is it true, sir.
2 Gent. I do well believe you.

[2] featured.

1 Gent. We must forbear. Here comes the gentleman,
The queen, and princess. [*Exeunt.*

Enter the Queen, Posthumus, *and* Imogen.

Queen. No, be assured you shall not find me, daughter, [139
After the slander of most step-mothers,
Evil-eyed unto you; you're my prisoner, but
Your gaoler shall deliver you the keys
That lock up your restraint. For you, Posthumus,
So soon as I can win th' offended king,
I will be known your advocate; marry, yet
The fire of rage is in him, and 'twere good [150
You leaned[3] unto his sentence with what patience
Your wisdom may inform you.
Post. Please your highness,
I will from hence to-day.
Queen. You know the peril:
I'll fetch a turn about the garden, pitying
The pangs of barred affections, though the king [160
Hath charged you should not speak together. [*Exit.*
Imo. O,
Dissembling courtesy! How fine this tyrant
Can tickle where she wounds!—My dearest husband,
I something fear my father's wrath; but nothing— [169
Always reserved my holy duty—what
His rage can do on me. You must be gone;
And I shall here abide the hourly shot
Of angry eyes, not comforted to live,
But that there is this jewel in the world
That I may see again.
Post. My queen! my mistress!
O lady, weep no more, lest I give cause
To be suspected of more tenderness [179
Than doth become a man. I will remain

[3] bowed.

The loyal'st husband that did e'er plight troth.
My residence in Rome at one Philario's,
Who to my father was a friend, to me
Known but by letter; thither write, my queen,
And with mine eyes I'll drink the words you send,
Though ink be made of gall.

Re-enter QUEEN.

QUEEN. Be brief, I pray you;
If the king come, I shall incur I know not
How much of his displeasure. <Yet I'll move him
To walk this way. I never do him wrong,
But he does buy my injuries to be friends,
Pays dear for my offences.> [*Exit.*
POST. Should we be taking leave
As long a term as yet we have to live,
The loathness to depart would grow. Adieu!
IMO. Nay, stay a little:
Were you but riding forth to air yourself,
Such parting were too petty. Look here, love;
This diamond was my mother's; take it, heart;
But keep it till you woo another wife,
When Imogen is dead.
POST. How! how! another?
You gentle gods, give me but this I have,
And sear up my embracements from a next
With bonds of death!—Remain, remain thou here [*Putting on the ring.*
While sense can keep it on! And, sweetest, fairest,
As I my poor self did exchange for you,
To your so infinite loss, so in our trifles
I still win of you; for my sake wear this;
It is a manacle of love; I'll place it
Upon this fairest prisoner. [*Putting a bracelet on her arm.*
IMO. O the gods!
When shall we see again?

Enter CYMBELINE *and Lords.*

POST. Alack! the king!
CYM. Thou basest thing, avoid! hence, from my sight!
If after this command thou fraught the court
With thy unworthiness, thou diest. Away!
Thou'rt poison to my blood.
POST. The gods protect you
And bless the good remainders of the court!
I am gone. [*Exit.*
IMO. There cannot be a pinch in death
More sharp than this is.
CYM. O disloyal thing,
That shouldst repair my youth, thou heap'st [instead]
A year's age on me.
IMO. I beseech you, sir,
Harm not yourself with your vexatiön;
I am senseless of your wrath; a touch more rare
Subdues all pangs, all fears.
CYM. Past grace? obedience?
IMO. Past hope, and in despair; that way, past grace.
CYM. That mightst have had the sole son of my queen!
IMO. O blessed, that I might not! I chose an eagle,
And did avoid a puttock.
CYM. Thou took'st a beggar; wouldst have made my throne
A seat for baseness.
IMO. No; I rather added
A lustre to it.
CYM. O thou vild one!
IMO. Sir,
It is your fault that I have loved Posthumus;
You bred him as my playfellow, and he is
A man worth any woman, overbuys me
Almost the sum he pays.
CYM. What! art thou mad?
IMO. Almost, sir; heaven restore me! Would I were
A neat-herd's daughter, and my Leonatus
Our neighbor shepherd's son!
CYM. Thou foolish thing!

Re-enter QUEEN.

They were again together; you have done

Not after our command. Away with her,
And pen her up. [281
QUEEN. Beseech your patience.—Peace!
Dear lady daughter, peace!—Sweet sovereign,
Leave us to ourselves, and make yourself some comfort
Out of your best advice.
CYM. Nay, let her languish
A drop of blood a day; and, being aged,
Die of this folly! [*Exeunt* CYMBELINE *and Lords.* [292
QUEEN. Fie! you must give way.

Enter PISANIO.

Here is your servant.—How now, sir! What news?
PIS. My lord your son drew on my master.
QUEEN. Ha!
No harm, I trust, is done? [300
PIS. There might have been,
But that my master rather played than fought,
And had no help of anger; they were parted
By gentlemen at hand.
QUEEN. I am very glad on't.
IMO. Your son's my father's friend; he takes his part. [309
To draw upon an exile!—O brave sir!—
I would they were in Afric both together,
Myself by with a needle, that I might prick
The goer-back.—Why came you from your master?
PIS. On his command: he would not suffer me
To bring him to the haven; left these notes [319
Of what commands I should be subject to,
When't pleased you to employ me.
QUEEN. This hath been
Your faithful servant; I dare lay mine honor
He will remain so.
PIS. I humbly thank your highness.
QUEEN. Pray, walk awhile.
IMO., *to* PISANIO. About some half-hour hence, [330
I pray you, speak with me. You shall at least
Go see my lord aboard; for this time leave me. [*Exit* PISANIO.

SCENE II

Elsewhere in the grounds of the palace, CLOTEN, *after his bout with* POSTHUMUS, *converses with two* LORDS, *of whom the one is a flatterer, and the other a free-thinker who takes care never to come to freedom of speech.*

1 LORD. Sir, I would advise you to shift a shirt; the violence of action hath made you reek as a sacrifice. Where air comes out, air comes in; there's none abroad so wholesome as that you vent. [11
CLO. If my shirt were bloody, then to shift it. Have I hurt him?
2 LORD. <No, faith; not so much as his patience.>
1 LORD. Hurt him! his body's a passable carcass if he be not hurt; it is a throughfare for steel if it be not hurt.
2 LORD. <His steel was in debt; it went o' th' backside the town.> [20
CLO. The villain would not stand me.
2 LORD. <No; but he fled forward still, toward your face.>
1 LORD. Stand you! You have land enough of your own; but he added to your having, gave you some ground.
2 LORD. <As many inches as you have oceans. Puppies!>
CLO. I would they had not come between us. [30
2 LORD. <So would I, till you had measured how long a fool you were upon the ground.>
CLO. And that she should love this fellow, and refuse me!
2 LORD. <If it be a sin to make a true election, she is damned.>
1 LORD. Sir, as I told you always, her beauty and her brain go not together: she's a good sign; but I have seen small reflection of her wit. [41
2 LORD. <She shines not upon fools, lest the reflection should hurt her.>

Clo. Come, I'll to my chamber. Would there had been some hurt done!

2 Lord. <I wish not so; unless it had been the fall of an ass, which is no great hurt.>

Clo. You'll go with us?

1 Lord. I'll attend your lordship. [50

Clo. Nay, come, let's go together.

2 Lord. Well, my lord. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III

In a room in the palace, Imogen *receives from* Pisanio *the tale of the departure of his Lord.*

Imo. I would thou grew'st unto the shores o' th' haven,
And questionedst every sail: if he should write,
And I not have it, 'twere a paper lost,
As offered mercy is. What was the last
That he spake to thee? [10

Pis. It was his queen, his queen!

Imo. Then waved his handkerchief?

Pis. And kissed it, madam.

Imo. Senseless linen, happier therein than I!—
And that was all?

Pis. No, madam; for so long
As he could make me with this eye or ear
Distinguish him from others, he did keep
The deck, with glove, or hat, or handkerchief, [21
Still waving, as the fits and stirs of's mind
Could best express how slow his soul sailed on,
How swift his ship.

Imo. Thou shouldst have made him
As little as a crow, or less, ere left
To after-eye him.

Pis. Madam, so I did. [30

Imo. I would have broke mine eye-strings, cracked them, but
To look upon him, till the diminution
Of space had pointed him sharp as my needle,
Nay, followed him, till he had melted from
The smallness of a gnat to air, and then
Have turned mine eye, and wept. But, good Pisanio, [40
When shall we hear from him?

Pis. Be assured, madam,
With his next vantage.

Imo. I did not take my leave of him, but had
Most pretty things to say; ere I could tell him
How I would think on him at certain hours
Such thoughts and such, or I could make him swear [51
The shes of Italy should not betray
Mine interest and his honor, or have charged him,
At the sixth hour of morn, at noon, at midnight,
T' encounter me with orisons, for then
I am in heaven for him; or ere I could
Give him that parting kiss, which I had set [60
Betwixt two charming words, comes in my father,
And, like the tyrannous breathing of the north,
Shakes all our buds from growing.

Enter a Lady.

Lady. The queen, madam,
Desires your highness' company.

Imo. Those things I bid you do, get them dispatched. [70
I will attend the queen.

Pis. Madam, I shall. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV

Posthumus *has arrived in Rome, and is established in the house of* Philario. *There his host is praising him to sundry visitors—a* Frenchman, *a* Dutchman, *a* Spaniard, *and* Iachimo, *a quarrel-seeking and malicious slanderer.*

Iach. Believe it, sir, I have seen him in Britain; he was then of a crescent note, expected to prove so worthy as since he hath been allowed the name [10 of; but I could then have looked on him without the help of admiration,[4] though the catalogue of his endowments had been tabled by his side and I to peruse him by items.

[4] without wonder.

PHI. You speak of him when he was less furnished than now he is with that which makes him both without and within. [19

FRENCH. I have seen him in France: we had very many there could behold the sun with as firm eyes as he.

IACH. This matter of marrying his king's daughter—wherein he must be weighed rather by her value than his own—words him, I doubt not, a great deal from the matter.

FRENCH. And then his banishment.

IACH. Ay, and the approbation of those that weep this lamentable divorce [30 under her colors are wonderfully to extend him; be it but to fortify her judgment—which else an easy battery might lay flat—for taking a beggar without less quality. But how comes it, he is to sojourn with you? How creeps acquaintance?

PHI. His father and I were soldiers together; to whom I have been often bound for no less than my life. Here comes the Briton: let him be so enter- [40 tained amongst you as suits, with gentlemen of your knowing, to a stranger of his quality.

Enter POSTHUMUS.

I beseech you all, be better known to this gentleman, whom I commend to you, as a noble friend of mine; how worthy he is I will leave to appear hereafter, rather than story him in his own hearing.

FRENCH. Sir, we have known together in Orleans. [51

POST. Since when I have been debtor to you for courtesies, which I will be ever to pay and yet pay still.

FRENCH. Sir, you o'er-rate my poor kindness. I was glad I did atone[5] my countryman and you; it had been pity you should have been put together with so mortal a purpose as then each bore, upon importance of so slight and trivial a nature. [61

POST. By your pardon, sir, I was then a young traveller; rather shunned to go even with what I heard than in my every action to be guided by others' experiences; but, upon my mended judgment —if I offend not to say it is mended— my quarrel was not altogether slight.

FRENCH. Faith, yes, to be put to the arbitrement of swords, and by such [70 two that would by all likelihood have confounded one the other, or have fallen both.

IACH. Can we, with manners, ask what was the difference?

FRENCH. Safely, I think. 'Twas a contention in public, which may, without contradiction, suffer the report. It was much like an argument that fell out last night, where each of us fell in praise of [80 our country mistresses; this gentleman at that time vouching—and upon warrant of bloody affirmation—his to be more fair, virtuous, wise, chaste, constant, qualified, and less attemptable, than any the rarest of our ladies in France.

IACH. That lady is not now living, or this gentleman's opinion by this worn out. [89

POST. She holds her virtue still, and I my mind.

IACH. You must not so far prefer her fore ours of Italy.

POST. Being so far provoked as I was in France, I would abate her nothing, though I profess myself her adorer, not her friend.

IACH. As fair and as good—a kind of hand-in-hand comparison—had been [100 something too fair and too good for any lady in Britain. If she went before others I have seen, as that diamond of yours outlustres many I have beheld, I could not but believe she excelled many; but I have not seen the most precious diamond that is, nor you the lady.

POST. I praised her as I rated her; so do I my stone. [109

IACH. What do you esteem it at?

POST. More than the world enjoys.

IACH. Either your unparagoned mistress is dead, or she's outprized by a trifle.

POST. You are mistaken; the one may be sold, or given; or if there were wealth enough for the purchase or merit for the

[5] reconcile.

gift; the other is not a thing for sale, and only the gift of the gods.

IACH. Which the gods have given you?

POST. Which, by their graces, I will keep. [121

IACH. You may wear her in title yours, but, you know, strange fowl light upon neighboring ponds. Your ring may be stolen, too; so your brace of unprizeable estimations, the one is but frail, and the other casual; a cunning thief, or a that way accomplished courtier, would hazard the winning both of first and last. [129

POST. Your Italy contains none so accomplished a courtier to convince the honor of my mistress, if, in the holding or loss of that, you term her frail. I do nothing doubt you have store of thieves; notwithstanding, I fear not my ring.

PHI., *seeing that the discussion is waxing warm.* Let us leave here, gentlemen.

POST. Sir, with all my heart. This worthy signior, I thank him, makes no stranger of me; we are familiar at first. [140

IACH. With five times so much conversation I should get ground of your fair mistress, make her go back, even to the yielding, had I admittance and opportunity to friend.

POST. No, no.

IACH. I dare thereupon pawn the moiety of my estate to your ring, which, in my opinion, o'ervalues it something; but I make my wager rather against [150 your confidence than her reputation; and, to bar your offence herein too, I durst attempt it against any lady in the world.

POST. You are a great deal abused [6] in too bold a persuasion; and I doubt not you sustain what y'are worthy of by your attempt.

IACH. What's that?

POST. A repulse; though your attempt, as you call it, deserves more—a punishment too. [161

PHI. Gentlemen, enough of this; it came in too suddenly; let it die as it was born, and, I pray you, be better acquainted.

IACH. Would I had put my estate and my neighbor's on the approbation [7] of what I have spoke!

POST. What lady would you choose to assail? [170

IACH. Yours; whom in constancy you think stands so safe. I will lay you ten thousand ducats to your ring, that, commend me to the court where your lady is, with no more advantage than the opportunity of a second conference, and I will bring from thence that honor of hers which you imagine so reserved.

POST. I will wage against your gold, gold to it: my ring I hold dear as my finger; 'tis part of it. [181

IACH. You are afraid, and therein the wiser. If you buy ladies' flesh at a million a dram, you cannot preserve it from tainting. But I see you have some religion in you, that you fear.

POST. This is but a custom in your tongue; you bear a graver purpose, I hope. [189

IACH. I am the master of my speeches, and would undergo what's spoken, I swear.

POST. Will you? I shall but lend my diamond till your return. Let there be covenants drawn between's: my mistress exceeds in goodness the hugeness of your unworthy thinking; I dare you to this match. Here's my ring.

PHI. I will have it no lay. [199

IACH. By the gods, it is one.—If I bring you no sufficient testimony that I have enjoyed the dearest bodily part of your mistress, my ten thousand ducats are yours; so is your diamond too: if I come off, and leave her in such honor as you have trust in, she your jewel, this your jewel, and my gold are yours; provided I have your commendation for my more free entertainment. [209

POST. I embrace these conditions; let us have articles betwixt us. Only, thus far you shall answer: if you make your voyage upon her and give me directly to understand that you have prevailed, I am no further your enemy; she is not worth our debate: if she remain un-

[6] deceived.

[7] proof.

seduced—you not making it appear otherwise—for your ill opinion, and th' assault you have made to her chastity, you shall answer me with your sword. [220

IACH. Your hand; a covenant. We will have these things set down by lawful counsel, and straight away for Britain, lest the bargain should catch cold and starve. I will fetch my gold and have our two wagers recorded.

POST. Agreed. [*Exeunt* POSTHUMUS *and* IACHIMO.

FRENCH. Will this hold, think you? [229

PHI. Signior Iachimo will not from it. Pray, let us follow 'em. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V

It is early morning, many days later. In CYMBELINE'S *palace, the* QUEEN *is attended by* CORNELIUS *and Ladies.*

QUEEN. Whiles yet the dew's on ground, gather those flowers:
Make haste; who has the note of them?

1 LADY. I, madam.

QUEEN. Dispatch. [*Exeunt Ladies.*
Now, Master doctor, have you brought those drugs? [10

COR. Pleaseth your highness, ay; here they are, madam: [*Presenting a small box.*
But I beseech your Grace, without offence—
My conscience bids me ask—wherefore you have
Commanded of me these most poisonous compounds, [19
Which are the movers of a languishing death,
But, though slow, deadly?

QUEEN. I wonder, doctor,
Thou ask'st me such a question: have I not been
Thy pupil long? Hast thou not learned me how
To make perfúmes? distil? preserve? yea, so
That our great king himself doth woo [30 me oft
For my confections? Having thus far proceeded—
Unless thou think'st me devilish—is't not meet
That I did amplify my judgment in
Other conclusions?[8] I will try the forces
Of these thy compounds on such creatures as [39
We count not worth the hanging—but none human—
To try the vigor of them and apply
Allayments to their act, and by them gather
Their several virtues and effects.

COR. Your highness
Shall from this practice but make hard your heart;
Besides, the seeing these effects will be
Both noisome and infectious. [50

QUEEN. O, content thee!

Enter PISANIO.

<Here comes a flattering rascal; upon him
Will I first work: he's for his master,
And enemy to my son.> How now, Pisanio!—
Doctor, your service for this time is ended;
Take your own way. [60

COR. <I do suspect you, madam;
But you shall do no harm.>

QUEEN, *to* PISANIO. Hark thee, a word.
[*Talks to him apart.*

COR. <I do not like her. She doth think she has
Strange ling'ring poisons. I do know her spirit,
And will not trust one of her malice with
A drug of such damned nature. Those she has [71
Will stupefy and dull the sense awhile;
Which first, perchance, she'll prove on cats and dogs,
Then afterward up higher; but there is
No danger in what show of death it makes,
More than the locking-up the spirits a time, [79
To be more fresh, reviving. She is fooled
With a most false effect; and I the truer,
So to be false with her.>

[8] experiments.

QUEEN. No further service, doctor,
Until I send for thee.
COR. I humbly take my leave. [*Exit.*
QUEEN. Weeps she still, sayst thou? Dost thou think in time
She will not quench, and let instructions enter [89
Where folly now possesses? Do thou work:
When thou shalt bring me word she loves my son,
I'll tell thee on the instant thou art then
As great as is thy master; greater, for
His fortunes all lie speechless, and his name
Is at last gasp; return he cannot, nor [98
Continue where he is; to shift his being[9]
Is to exchange one misery with another,
And every day that comes comes to decay
A day's work in him. What shalt thou expect,
To be depender on a thing that leans,
Who cannot be new built, nor has no friends,
So much as but to prop him? [*The* QUEEN *drops the box;* PISANIO *takes it up.*] Thou tak'st up [110
Thou know'st not what; but take it for thy labor:
It is a thing I made, which hath the king
Five times redeemed from death; I do not know
What is more cordial: nay, I prithee, take it;
It is an earnest of a farther good
That I mean to thee. Tell thy mistress how [120
The case stands with her; do't as from thyself.
Think what a chance thou chancest[10] on; but think:
Thou hast thy mistress still; to boot, my son,
Who shall take notice of thee. I'll move the king
To any shape of thy preferment such
As thou'lt desire; and then myself, I [130
chiefly,
That set thee on to this desert, am bound
To load thy merit richly. Call my women;
Think on my words. [*Exit* PISANIO.
A sly and constant knave,
Not to be shaked; the agent for his master,
And the remembrancer of her to hold
The hand-fast to her lord. I have given him that [141
Which, if he take, shall quite unpeople her
Of liegers for her sweet, and which she after,
Except she bend her humor, shall be assured
To taste of too.

Re-enter PISANIO *and Ladies.*

So, so! well done, well done! [150
The violets, cowslips, and the primeroses
Bear to my closet.—Fare thee well, Pisanio:
Think on my words. [*Exeunt* QUEEN *and Ladies.*
PIS. And shall do;
But when to my good lord I prove untrue, [159
I'll choke myself; there's all I'll do for you. [*Exit.*

SCENE VI

In another room in the palace, IMOGEN *bemoans her hard lot.*

IMO. A father cruel, and a step-dame false;
A foolish suitor to a wedded lady,
That hath her husband banished: O! that husband,
My supreme crown of grief! and those repeated [9
Vexations of it! Had I been thief-stol'n,
As my two brothers, happy! but most miserable
Is the desire that's glorious: blest be those,
How mean soe'er, that have their honest wills,
Which seasons comfort. Who may this be? Fie!

[9] change his abode.
[10] B, changest.

Enter PISANIO *and* IACHIMO.

PIS. Madam, a noble gentleman of [20
Rome
Comes from my lord with letters.
IACH. Change you, madam?
The worthy Leonatus is in safety,
And greets your highness dearly.
[*Presents a letter.*
IMO. Thanks, good sir:
You're kindly welcome.
IACH., *while* IMOGEN *reads the letter.*
<All of her that is out of door
most rich! [31
If she be furnished with a mind so rare,
She is alone th' Arabian bird; and I
Have lost the wager. Boldness be my
friend!
Arm me, audacity, from head to foot!
Or, like the Parthian, I shall flying fight;
Rather, directly fly.>
IMO. "He is one of the noblest note, to
whose kindnesses I am most infinitely [40
tied. Reflect upon him accordingly, as
you value your truest[11] LEONATUS."
So far I read aloud;
But even the very middle of my heart
Is warmed by th' rest, and takes it
thankfully.
You are as welcome, worthy sir, as I
Have words to bid you; and shall find
it so
In all that I can do. [50
IACH. Thanks, fairest lady.
What! are men mad? Hath nature given
them eyes
To see this vaulted arch, and the rich
crop
Of sea and land, which can distinguish
'twixt
The fiery orbs above and the twinned
stones
Upon th' unnumbered[12] beach? and [60
can we not
Partition make with spectacles so pre-
cious
'Twixt fair and foul?
IMO. What makes your admiration?[13]
IACH. It cannot be i' th' eye; for apes
and monkeys
'Twixt two such shes would chatter this
way and [69
Contemn with mows the other; nor i' th'
judgment,
For idiots in this case of favor[14] would
Be wisely definite; nor i' th' appetite;
Sluttery to such neat excellence opposed
Should make desire vomit emptiness,
Not so allured to feed.
IMO. What is the matter, trow?
IACH. The cloyëd will—
That satiate yet unsatisfied desire, that
tub [80
Both filled and running—ravening first
the lamb,
Longs after for the garbage.
IMO. What, dear sir,
Thus raps you? are you well?
IACH. Thanks, madam, well.
[*To* PISANIO.] Beseech you, sir,
Desire my man's abode[15] where I did
leave him;
He's strange and peevish. [90
PIS. I was going, sir,
To give him welcome. [*Exit.*
IMO. Continues well my lord? his
health, beseech you?
IACH. Well, madam.
IMO. Is he disposed to mirth? I hope
he is.
IACH. Exceeding pleasant; none a
stranger there [99
So merry and so gamesome: he is called
The Briton reveller.
IMO. When he was here
He did incline to sadness, and oft-times
Not knowing why.
IACH. I never saw him sad.
There is a Frenchman his companion,
one,
An eminent monsieur, that, it seems,
much loves
A Gallian girl at home; he furnaces [110
The thick sighs from him, whiles the jolly
Briton—
Your lord, I mean—laughs from's free
lungs, cries, "O
Can my sides hold! to think that man,
who knows
By history, report, or his own proof,

[11] B, "trust," which may possibly be right.
[12] B, the numbered.
[13] astonishment.
[14] looks.
[15] Ask my man to stay.

What woman is, yea, what she cannot choose
But must be, will's free hours languish for
Assurëd bondage?"
IMO. Will my lord say so?
IACH. Ay, madam, with his eyes in flood with laughter:
It is a recreation to be by
And hear him mock the Frenchman; but, heavens know,
Some men are much to blame.
IMO. Not he, I hope.
IACH. Not he; but yet heaven's bounty towards him might
Be used more thankfully. In himself, 'tis much:
In you—which I account his beyond all talents—
Whilst I am bound to wonder, I am bound
To pity too.
IMO. What do you pity, sir?
IACH. Two creatures, heartily.
IMO. Am I one, sir?
You look on me: what wrack discern you in me
Deserves your pity?
IACH. Lamentable! What!
To hide me from the radiant sun and solace
I' th' dungeon by a snuff!
IMO. I pray you, sir,
Deliver with more openness your answers
To my demands. Why do you pity me?
IACH. That others do—
I was about to say, enjoy your— But
It is an office of the gods to venge it,
Not mine to speak on't.
IMO. You do seem to know
Something of me, or what concerns me; pray you—
Since doubting things go ill often hurts more
Than to be sure they do; for certainties
Either are past remedies, or, timely knowing,
The remedy then born—discover to me
What both you spur and stop.
IACH. Had I this cheek
To bathe my lips upon; this hand, whose touch,
Whose every touch, would force the feeler's soul
To th' oath of loyalty; this object, which
Takes prisoner the wild motion of mine eye,
Firing it only here; should I—damned then—
Slaver with lips as common as the stairs
That mount the Capitol; join gripes with hands
Made hard with hourly falsehood—falsehood, as
With labor—then by-peeping in an eye,
Base and illustrous[16] as the smoky light
That's fed with stinking tallow; it were fit
That all the plagues of hell should at one time
Encounter such revolt.
IMO. My lord, I fear,
Has forgot Britain.
IACH. And himself. Not I,
Inclined to this intelligence, pronounce
The beggary of his change; but 'tis your graces
That from my mutest conscience to my tongue
Charms this report out.
IMO. Let me hear no more.
IACH. O dearest soul! your cause doth strike my heart
With pity, that doth make me sick. A lady
So fair, and fastened to an empery
Would make the great'st king double, to be partnered
With tom-boys hired with that self-exhibition
Which your own coffers yield! with diseased ventures
That play with all infirmities for gold
Which rottenness can lend nature! such boiled stuff
As well might poison poison! Be revenged;
Or she that bore you was no queen, and you
Recoil from your great stock.

[16] B, illustrious.

IMO. Revenged!
How should I be revenged? If this be true—
As I have such a heart that both mine ears
Must not in haste abuse—if it be true,
How should I be revenged?
IACH. Should he make me
Live like Diana's priest, betwixt cold sheets,
Whiles he is vaulting variable ramps,
In your despite, upon your purse? Revenge it.
I dedicate myself to your sweet pleasure,
More noble than that runagate to your bed,
And will continue fast to your affection,
Still close as sure.
IMO., *calling*. What ho, Pisanio!
IACH. Let me my service tender on your lips.
IMO. Away! I do condemn mine ears that have
So long attended thee. If thou wert honorable,
Thou wouldst have told this tale for virtue, not
For such an end thou seek'st; as base as strange.
Thou wrong'st a gentleman who is as far
From thy report as thou from honor, and
Solicits here a lady that disdains
Thee and the devil alike.—[*Calling.*] What ho, Pisanio!—
The king my father shall be made acquainted
Of thy assault; if he shall think it fit
A saucy stranger in his court to mart
As in a Romish stew and to expound
His beastly mind to us, he hath a court
He little cares for and a daughter who
He not respects at all.—[*Calling.*] What ho, Pisanio!
IACH. O happy Leonatus! I may say:
The credit that thy lady hath of thee
Deserves thy trust, and thy most perfect goodness
Her assured credit.—Blessëd live you long!
A lady to the worthiest sir that ever
Country called his; and you his mistress, only
For the most worthiest fit. Give me your pardon.
I have spoken this, to know if your affiance
Were deeply rooted, and shall make your lord
That which he is, new o'er; and he is one
The truest mannered; such a holy witch
That he enchants societies into him;
Half all men's hearts are his.
IMO. You make amends.
IACH. He sits 'mongst men like a descended god:
He hath a kind of honor sets him off,
More than a mortal seeming. Be not angry,
Most mighty princess, that I have adventured
To try your taking of a false report; which hath
Honored with confirmation your great judgment
In the election of a sir so rare,
Which you know cannot err. The love I bear him
Made me to fan you thus; but the gods made you,
Unlike all others, chaffless. Pray, your pardon.
IMO. All's well, sir. Take my power i' th' court for yours.
IACH. My humble thanks. I had almost forgot
T' entreat your Grace but in a small request,
And yet of moment too, for it concerns
Your lord, myself, and other noble friends,
Are partners in the business.
IMO. Pray, what is't?
IACH. Some dozen Romans of us and your lord—
The best feather of our wing—have mingled sums
To buy a present for the emperor;
Which I, the factor for the rest, have done
In France; 'tis plate of rare device, and jewels

Of rich and exquisite form; their values great;
And I am something curious,[17] being strange,
To have them in safe stowage. May it please you
To take them in protection?
IMO. Willingly;
And pawn mine honor for their safety: since
My lord hath interest in them, I will keep them
In my bedchamber.
IACH. They are in a trunk,
Attended by my men; I will make bold
To send them to you, only for this night;
I must aboard to-morrow.
IMO. O! no, no!
IACH. Yes, I beseech, or I shall short my word
By length'ning my return. From Gallia
I crossed the seas on purpose and on promise
To see your Grace.
IMO. I thank you for your pains;
But not away to-morrow!
IACH. O! I must, madam:
Therefore I shall beseech you, if you please
To greet your lord with writing, do't to-night:
I have outstood my time, which is material
To th' tender of our present.
IMO. I will write.
Send your trunk to me; it shall safe be kept,
And truly yielded you. You're very welcome. [*Exeunt.*

ACT TWO

SCENE I

Before CYMBELINE'S *palace,* CLOTEN *is lamenting, to the two* LORDS *of a previous scene, his ill-luck in the game of bowls he has been playing.*

CLO. Was there ever man had such luck! when I kissed the jack, upon an up-cast to be hit away! I had a hundred pound on't; and then a whoreson jackanapes must take me up for swearing, as if I borrowed mine oaths of him and might not spend them at my pleasure.

1 LORD. What got he by that? You have broke his pate with your bowl.

2 LORD. <If his wit had been like him that broke it, it would have run all out.>

CLO. When a gentleman is disposed to swear, it is not for any standers-by to curtail his oaths, ha?

2 LORD. No, my lord; <nor crop the ears of them.>

CLO. Whoreson dog! I give him satisfaction! Would he had been one of my rank!

2 LORD. <To have smelt like a fool.>

CLO. I am not vexed more at any thing in the earth. A pox on't! I had rather not be so noble as I am. They dare not fight with me because of the queen my mother. Every Jack-slave hath his bellyful of fighting, and I must go up and down like a cock that nobody can match.

2 LORD. <You are cock and capon too; and you crow, cock, with your comb on.>

CLO. Sayest thou?

2 LORD. It is not fit your lordship should undertake every companion that you give offence to.

CLO. No, I know that; but it is fit I should commit offence to my inferiors.

2 LORD. Ay, it is fit for your lordship only.

CLO. Why, so I say.

1 LORD. Did you hear of a stranger that's come to court to-night?

CLO. A stranger, and I not know on't!

2 LORD. <He's a strange fellow himself, and knows it not.>

1 LORD. There's an Italian come; and, 'tis thought, one of Leonatus' friends.

CLO. Leonatus! a banished rascal; and he's another, whatsoever he be. Who told you of this stranger?

1 LORD. One of your lordship's pages.

CLO. Is it fit I went to look upon him? Is there no derogation in't?

1 LORD. You cannot derogate, my lord.

CLO. Not easily, I think.

[17] anxious.

2 Lord. <You are a fool, granted; therefore your issues, being foolish, do not derogate.>

Clo. Come, I'll go see this Italian. What I have lost to-day at bowls I'll win to-night of him. Come, go.

2 Lord. I'll attend your lordship. [*Exeunt* Cloten *and* First Lord.

That such a crafty devil as is his mother
Should yield the world this ass! a woman that
Bears all down with her brain, and this her son
Cannot take two from twenty, for his heart,
And leave eighteen. Alas! poor princess,
Thou divine Imogen, what thou endur'st
Betwixt a father by thy step-dame governed,
A mother hourly coining plots, a wooer
More hateful than the foul expulsion is
Of thy dear husband, than that horrid act
Of the divorce he'd make. The heavens hold firm
The walls of thy dear honor; keep unshaked
That temple, thy fair mind; that thou mayst stand,
T' enjoy thy banished lord and this great land! [*Exit.*

Scene II

It is close to midnight in Imogen's *bedchamber. Amongst the articles in the room is a large trunk, supposed to contain plate and jewels, but actually concealing* Iachimo. Imogen *is in bed reading. A* Lady *is in attendance.*

Imo. Who's there? my woman Helen?
Lady. Please you, madam.
Imo. What hour is it?
Lady. Almost midnight, madam.
Imo. I have read three hours then; mine eyes are weak;
Fold down the leaf where I have left; to bed:
Take not away the taper, leave it burning,
And if thou canst awake by four o' th' clock,
I prithee, call me. Sleep hath seized me wholly. [*Exit* Lady.
To your protection I commend me, gods!
From fairies and the tempters of the night
Guard me, beseech ye! [*Sleeps.* Iachimo *comes from the trunk.*

Iach. The crickets sing, and man's o'er-labored sense
Repairs itself by rest. Our Tarquin thus
Did softly press the rushes ere he wakened
The chastity he wounded.—Cytherea,
How bravely thou becom'st thy bed! fresh lily,
And whiter than the sheets! That I might touch!
But kiss: one kiss! Rubies unparagoned,
How dearly they do't! 'Tis her breathing that
Perfumes the chamber thus; the flame o' th' taper
Bows toward her, and would under-peep her lids,
To see th' enclosëd lights, now canopied
Under these windows, white and azure, laced
With blue of heaven's own tinct. But my design,
To note the chamber. [*Brings forth tablets, and proceeds to make notes.*] I will write all down:
Such and such pictures; there the window; such
Th' adornment of her bed; the arras figures,
Why, such and such; and the contents o' th' story.
Ah! but some natural notes about her body,
Above ten thousand meaner moveables
Would testify, t' enrich mine inventory.
O sleep! thou ape of death, lie dull upon her;
And be her senses but as a monument
Thus in a chapel lying. Come off, come off. [*Takes off her bracelet.*
As slippery as the Gordian knot was hard!

'Tis mine; and this will witness outwardly,
As strongly as the conscience does within,
To th' madding of her lord. On her left breast
A mole cinque-spotted, like the crimson drops
I' th' bottom of a cowslip: here's a voucher
Stronger than ever law could make: this secret
Will force him think I have picked the lock and ta'en
The treasure of her honor. No more. To what end? [*Puts away his tablets.*
Why should I write this down, that's riveted,
Screwed to my memory? She hath been reading late—
The tale of Tereus; here the leaf's turned down
Where Philomel gave up. I have enough:
To th' trunk again, and shut the spring of it.
Swift, swift, you dragons of the night, that dawning
May bare the raven's eye! I lodge in fear;
Though this a heavenly angel, hell is here. [*Clock strikes.*
One, two, three:[1] time, time! [*Goes into the trunk.*

Scene III

Very early the next morning, Cloten *and the two* Lords *are outside* Imogen's *apartments, awaiting her arising. They have not been abed, having played cards all night.*

1 Lord. Your lordship is the most patient man in loss, the most coldest that ever turned up ace.

Clo. It would make any man cold to lose.

1 Lord. But not every man patient after the noble temper of your lordship. You are most hot and furious when you win.

Clo. Winning will put any man into courage. If I could get this foolish Imogen, I should have gold enough. It's almost morning, is't not?

1 Lord. Day, my lord.

Clo. I would this music would come. I am advised to give her music o' mornings; they say it will penetrate.

Enter Musicians.

Come on; tune. If you can penetrate her with your fingering, so; we'll try wi' th' tongue too: if none will do, let her remain; but I'll never give o'er. First, a very excellent good-conceited thing; after, a wonderful sweet air, with admirable rich words to it: and then let her consider.

Song.

Hark! hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,
And Phœbus gins arise,
His steeds to water at those springs
On chaliced flowers that lies;
And winking Mary-buds begin
To ope their golden eyes:
With every thing that pretty bin,[2]
My lady sweet, arise:
Arise, arise!

Clo. So, get you gone. If this penetrate, I will consider your music the better; if it do not, it is a vice in her ears, which horse-hairs and calves'-guts, nor the voice of unpaved eunuch to boot, can never amend. [*Exeunt Musicians.*

2 Lord. Here comes the king.

Clo. I am glad I was up so late, for that's the reason I was up so early; he cannot choose but take this service I have done fatherly.

Enter Cymbeline *and* Queen.

Good morrow to your majesty and to my gracious mother.

Cym. Attend you here the door of our stern daughter?
Will she not forth?

Clo. I have assailed her with music, but she vouchsafes no notice.

Cym. The exile of her minion is too new;

[1] A good example of the swift passage of time on the Elizabethan stage. The clock apparently omitted to strike twelve, one, and two.

[2] B, is.

She hath not yet forgot him; some more time
Must wear the print of his remembrance out,
And then she's yours.
QUEEN. You are most bound to th' king,
Who lets go by no vantages that may [70
Prefer you to his daughter. Frame yourself
To orderly soliciting, and be friended
With aptness of the season; make denials
Increase your services; so seem as if
You were inspired to do those duties which
You tender to her; that you in all obey her— [80
Save when command to your dismission tends,
And therein you are senseless.
CLO. Senseless! not so.

Enter a MESSENGER.

MESS. So like you, sir, ambassadors from Rome;
The one is Caius Lucius.
CYM. A worthy fellow, [89
Albeit he comes on angry purpose now;
But that's no fault of his: we must receive him
According to the honor of his sender;
And towards himself, his goodness forespent on us,
We must extend our notice.—Our dear son,
When you have given good morning to your mistress, [99
Attend the queen and us; we shall have need
T' employ you towards this Roman.—Come, our queen. [*Exeunt all but* CLOTEN.
CLO. If she be up, I'll speak with her; if not,
Let her lie still, and dream.—By your leave—[*calling*] ho!— [*Knocks.*
I know her women are about her. What
If I do line one of their hands? 'Tis gold [111
Which buys admittance; oft it doth; yea, and makes
Diana's rangers false themselves, yield up
Their deer to th' stand o' th' stealer; and 'tis gold
Which makes the true man killed and saves the thief;
Nay, sometime hangs both thief and true man. What [120
Can it not do and undo? I will make
One of her women lawyer to me, for
I yet not understand the case myself.—
By your leave. [*Knocks.*

Enter a LADY, *from within.*

LADY. Who's there, that knocks?
CLO. A gentleman.
LADY. No more?
CLO. Yes, and a gentlewoman's son.
LADY. <That's more. [130
Than some whose tailors are as dear as yours
Can justly boast of.> What's your lordship's pleasure?
CLO. Your lady's person: is she ready?
LADY. Ay—
To keep her chamber.
CLO. There's gold for you; sell me your good report.
LADY. How! my good name? or to report of you [141
What I shall think is good?—The princess!

Enter IMOGEN, *from within.*

CLO. Good morrow, fairest; sister, your sweet hand. [*Exit* LADY.
IMO. Good morrow, sir. You lay out too much pains
For purchasing but trouble; the thanks I give [150
Is telling you that I am poor of thanks
And scarce can spare them.
CLO. Still, I swear I love you.
IMO. If you but said so, 'twere as deep with me:
If you swear still, your recompense is still
That I regard it not.
CLO. This is no answer.

IMO. But that you shall not say I yield being silent,
I would not speak. I pray you, spare me: 'faith,
I shall unfold equal discourtesy
To your best kindness. One of your great knowing
Should learn, being taught, forbearance.
CLO. To leave you in your madness, 'twere my sin:
I will not.
IMO. Fools are not mad folks.
CLO. Do you call me fool?
IMO. As I am mad, I do:
If you'll be patient, I'll no more be mad;
That cures us both. I am much sorry, sir,
You put me to forget a lady's manners,
By being so verbal; and learn now, for all,
That I, which know my heart, do here pronounce,
By th' very truth of it, I care not for you;
And am so near the lack of charity—
To accuse myself—I hate you; which I had rather
You felt than make't my boast.
CLO. You sin against
Obedience, which you owe your father. For
The contract you pretend with that base wretch,
One bred of alms and fostered with cold dishes,
With scraps o' th' court, it is no contract, none;
And, though it be allowed in meaner parties
(Yet who than he more mean?) to knit their souls—
On whom there is no more dependency
But brats and beggary—in self-figured knot;
Yet you are curbed from that enlargement by
The consequence o' th' crown, and must not soil
The precious note of it with a base slave,
A hilding for a livery, a squire's cloth,
A pantler, not so eminent.
IMO. Profane fellow!
Wert thou the son of Jupiter, and no more
But what thou art besides, thou wert too base
To be his groom; thou wert dignified enough,
Even to the point of envy, if 'twere made
Comparative for your virtues, to be styled
The under-hangman of his kingdom, and hated
For being preferred so well.
CLO. The south-fog rot him!
IMO. He never can meet more mischance than come
To be but named of thee. His meanest garment
That ever hath but clipped his body, is dearer
In my respect than all the hairs above thee,
Were they all made such men. [*Calling.*] How now, Pisanio!

Enter PISANIO.

CLO. "His garment"! Now, the devil—
IMO. To Dorothy my woman hie thee presently—
CLO. "His garment"!
IMO. <I am sprighted with a fool,
Frighted, and angered worse.> Go, bid my woman
Search for a jewel that too casually
Hath left mine arm; it was thy master's. 'Shrew me
If I would lose it for a revenue
Of any king's in Europe. I do think
I saw't this morning; confident I am
Last night 'twas on mine arm; I kissed it;
I hope it be not gone to tell my lord
That I kiss aught but he.
PIS. 'Twill not be lost.
IMO. I hope so; go, and search.
[*Exit* PISANIO.
CLO. You have abused me: "His meanest garment"!
IMO. Ay, I said so, sir:
If you will make't an action, call witness to't.
CLO. I will inform your father.

IMO. Your mother too:
She's my good lady, and will conceive, I hope,
But the worst of me. So I leave you, sir,
To th' worst of discontent. [*Exit.*
CLO. I'll be revenged.
"His meanest garment"! Well! [*Exit.*

SCENE IV

Many days have passed, and IACHIMO *is back in Italy, but* POSTHUMUS *has not yet seen him and does not know of his arrival.* PHILARIO, *in whose house he is, is uneasy about the outcome of the wager; but* POSTHUMUS *has no fears.*

POST. Fear it not, sir; I would I were so sure
To win the king as I am bold her honor
Will remain hers. [10
PHI. What means do you make to him?
POST. Not any, but abide the change of time,
Quake in the present winter's state and wish
That warmer days would come; in these feared hopes,
I barely gratify your love; they failing,
I must die much your debtor. [20
PHI. Your very goodness and your company
O'erpays all I can do. By this, your king
Hath heard of great Augustus; Caius Lucius
Will do's commission throughly, and I think
He'll grant the tribute, send th' arrearages, [30
Or look upon our Romans, whose remembrance
Is yet fresh in their grief.
POST. I do believe—
Statist though I am none, nor like to be—
That this will prove a war; and you shall hear
The legions now in Gallia sooner landed
In our not-fearing Britain than have [40 tidings
Of any penny tribute paid. Our countrymen
Are men more ordered than when Julius Cæsar
Smiled at their lack of skill, but found their courage
Worthy his frowning at: their discipline,
Now mingled with their courages, will make known [50
To their approvers they are people such
That mend upon the world.
PHI. See! Iachimo!

Enter IACHIMO.

POST. The swiftest harts have posted you by land,
And winds of all the corners kissed your sails,
To make your vessel nimble.
PHI. Welcome, sir! [60
POST. I hope the briefness of your answer made
The speediness of your return.
IACH. Your lady
Is one of the fairest that I have looked upon.
POST. And, therewithal, the best; or let her beauty
Look through a casement to allure false hearts [70
And be false with them.
IACH. Here are letters for you.
POST. Their tenor good, I trust.
IACH. 'Tis very like.
PHI. Was Caius Lucius in the Britain court
When you were there?
IACH. He was expected then,
But not approached.
POST. All is well yet. [80
Sparkles this stone as it was wont? or is't not
Too dull for your good wearing?
IACH. If I have lost it,
I should have lost the worth of it in gold.
I'll make a journey twice as far t' enjoy
A second night of such sweet shortness which [89
Was mine in Britain; for the ring is won.
POST. The stone's too hard to come by.

IACH. Not a whit,
Your lady being so easy.
POST. Make not, sir,
Your loss your sport: I hope you know that we
Must not continue friends.
IACH. Good sir, we must,
If you keep covenant. Had I not brought
The knowledge of your mistress home, I grant
We were to question farther, but I now
Profess myself the winner of her honor,
Together with your ring; and not the wronger
Of her or you, having proceeded but
By both your wills.
POST. If you can make't apparent
That you have tasted her in bed, my hand
And ring is yours; if not, the foul opinion
You had of her pure honor gains or loses
Your sword or mine, or masterless leaves both
To who shall find them.
IACH. Sir, my circumstances,
Being so near the truth as I will make them,
Must first induce you to believe: whose strength
I will confirm with oath; which, I doubt not,
You'll give me leave to spare, when you shall find
You need it not.
POST. Proceed.
IACH. First, her bedchamber—
Where I confess I slept not, but profess
Had that was well worth watching—it was hanged
With tapestry of silk and silver; the story,
Proud Cleopatra, when she met her Roman,
And Cydnus swelled above the banks, or for
The press of boats or pride; a piece of work
So bravely done, so rich, that it did strive
In workmanship and value; which I wondered
Could be [so] rarely and exactly wrought,
Since the true life on't was—
POST. This is true;
And this you might have heard of here, by me,
Or by some other.
IACH. More particulars
Must justify my knowledge?
POST. So they must,
Or do your honor injury.
IACH. The chimney
Is south the chamber, and the chimney-piece
Chaste Dian bathing; never saw I figures
So likely to report themselves; the cutter
Was as another nature, dumb; outwent her,
Motion and breath left out.
POST. This is a thing
Which you might from relation likewise reap,
Being, as it is, much spoke of.
IACH. The roof o' th' chamber
With golden cherubins is fretted; her andirons—
I had forgot them—were two winking Cupids
Of silver, each on one foot standing, nicely
Depending on their brands.
POST. This is her honor!
Let it be granted you have seen all this—and praise
Be given to your remembrance—the description
Of what is in her chamber nothing saves
The wager you have laid.
IACH. Then, if you can,
Be pale:
I beg but leave to air this jewel; see!
[*Showing the bracelet.*
And, now 'tis up again, it must be married
To that your diamond; I'll keep them.
POST. Jove!—
Once more let me behold it. Is it that
Which I left with her?
IACH. Sir—I thank her—that:

She stripped it from her arm; I see her yet;
Her pretty action did outsell her gift,
And yet enriched it too. She gave it me, and said
She prized it once.
POST. May be she plucked it off
To send it me.
IACH. She writes so to you, doth she?
POST. O! no, no, no, 'tis true. Here, take this too; [*Gives the ring.*
It is a basilisk unto mine eye,
Kills me to look on't.—Let there be no honor,
Where there is beauty; truth, where semblance; love,
Where there's another man; the vows of women
Of no more bondage be to where they are made
Than they are to their virtues, which is nothing.
O! above measure false.
PHI. Have patience, sir,
And take your ring again; 'tis not yet won:
It may be probable she lost it; or
Who knows if one of her women, being corrupted,
Hath stolen it from her?
POST. Very true;
And so I hope he came by't.—Back my ring.
Render to me some corporal sign about her,
More evident than this; for this was stolen.
IACH. By Jupiter, I had it from her arm.
POST. Hark you, he swears; by Jupiter he swears.
'Tis true.—Nay, keep the ring.—'Tis true: I am sure
She would not lose it; her attendants are
All sworn and honorable; they induced to steal it!
And by a stranger! No, he hath enjoyed her;
The cognizance of her incontinency
Is this; she hath bought the name of whore thus dearly.—
There, take thy hire; and all the fiends of hell
Divide themselves between you!
PHI. Sir, be patient:
This is not strong enough to be believed
Of one persuaded well of—
POST. Never talk on't;
She hath been colted by him.
IACH. If you seek
For further satisfying, under her breast—
Worthy the pressing—lies a mole, right proud
Of that most delicate lodging: by my life,
I kissed it, and it gave me present hunger
To feed again, though full. You do remember
This stain upon her?
POST. Ay, and it doth confirm
Another stain, as big as hell can hold,
Were there no more but it.
IACH. Will you hear more?
POST. Spare your arithmetic; never count the turns;
Once, and a million!
IACH. I'll be sworn—
POST. No swearing.
If you will swear you have not done't, you lie;
And I will kill thee if thou dost deny
Thou'st made me cuckold.
IACH. I'll deny nothing.
POST. O! that I had her here, to tear her limb-meal.
I will go there and do't, i' th' court, before
Her father. I'll do something— [*Exit.*
PHI. Quite besides
The government of patience!—You have won:
Let's follow him, and pervert the present wrath
He hath against himself.
IACH. With all my heart.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V

POSTHUMUS *has sought the seclusion of his own room, to give way to his gloomy thoughts.*

POST. Is there no way for men to be, but women
Must be half-workers? We are all bastards;
And that most venerable man which I
Did call my father was I know not where
When I was stamped; some coiner with his tools [11
Made me a counterfeit; yet my mother seemed
The Dian of that time; so doth my wife
The nonpareil of this. O, vengeance, vengeance!
Me of my lawful pleasure she restrained,
And prayed me oft forbearance; did it with
A pudency so rosy the sweet view on't [20
Might well have warmed old Saturn; that I thought her
As chaste as unsunned snow. O, all the devils!
This yellow Iachimo, in an hour—was't not?
Or less—at first—perchance he spoke not, but
Like a full-acorned boar, a German one,
Cried "O!" and mounted; found no [30 opposition
But what he looked for should oppose and she
Should from encounter guard. Could I find out
The woman's part in me! For there's no motion
That tends to vice in man but, I affirm,
It is the woman's part; be it lying, note it, [40
The woman's; flattering, hers; deceiving, hers;
Lust and rank thoughts, hers, hers; revenges, hers;
Ambitions, covetings, change of prides, disdain,
Nice[4] longing, slanders, mutability,
All faults that man may name, nay, that hell knows,
Why, hers in part, or all; but, rather, all; [51
For even to vice
They are not constant, but are changing still
One vice but of a minute old for one
Not half so old as that. I'll write against them,
Detest them, curse them. Yet 'tis greater skill,
In a true hate, to pray they have their will: [61
The very devils cannot plague them better. [*Exit.*

[4] affected.

ACT THREE

SCENE I

In a hall in CYMBELINE'S *palace, the* KING, QUEEN, CLOTEN, *and Lords are receiving* CAIUS LUCIUS *and his retinue.*[1]

CYM. Now say, what would Augustus Cæsar with us?
LUC. When Julius Cæsar—whose remembrance yet
Lives in men's eyes, and will to ears and tongues
Be theme and hearing ever—was in this Britain, [11
And conquered it, Cassibelan, thine uncle—
Famous in Cæsar's praises, no whit less
Than in his feats deserving it—for him
And his succession, granted Rome a tribute,
Yearly three thousand pounds, which by thee lately
Is left untendered. [20
QUEEN. And, to kill the marvel,
Shall be so ever.
CLO. There be many Cæsars
Ere such another Julius. Britain is
A world by itself; and we will nothing pay
For wearing our own noses.
QUEEN. That opportunity,
Which then they had to take from's, to resume [30
We have again.—Remember, sir, my liege,
The kings your ancestors, together with

[1] The scene is clearly the same day as II 3 and equally clearly long after II 4 and 5. Shakespeare often shows astounding carelessness in such matters. In this play it is impossible to reconcile the order of the scenes with the time-scheme.

The natural bravery of your isle, which stands
As Neptune's park, ribbed and paled in
With rocks unscaleable and roaring waters,
With sands, that will not bear your enemies' boats,
But suck them up to th' topmast. A kind of conquest
Cæsar made here, but made not here his brag
Of "came and saw and overcame:" with shame—
The first that ever touched him—he was carried
From off our coast, twice beaten; and his shipping—
Poor ignorant baubles!—on our terrible seas,
Like egg-shells moved upon their surges, cracked
As easily 'gainst our rocks: for joy whereof
The famed Cassibelan, who was once at point—
O giglot fortune!—to master Cæsar's sword,
Made Lud's town with rejoicing fires bright,
And Britons strut with courage.

CLO. Come, there's no more tribute to be paid. Our kingdom is stronger than it was at that time; and, as I said, there is no moe such Cæsars; other of them may have crooked noses, but to owe such straight arms none.

CYM. Son, let your mother end.

CLO. We have yet many among us can gripe as hard as Cassibelan; I do not say I am one, but I have a hand. Why tribute? why should we pay tribute? If Cæsar can hide the sun from us with a blanket, or put the moon in his pocket, we will pay him tribute for light; else, sir, no more tribute, pray you now.

CYM. You must know,
Till the injurious Romans did extort
This tribute from us, we were free; Cæsar's ambition—
Which swelled so much that it did almost stretch
The sides o' th' world—against all color here
Did put the yoke upon's; which to shake off
Becomes a war-like people, whom we reckon
Ourselves to be. We do say then to Cæsar
Our ancestor was that Mulmutius which
Ordained our laws, whose use the sword of Cæsar
Hath too much mangled; whose repair and franchise
Shall, by the power we hold, be our good deed,
Though Rome be therefore angry. Mulmutius made our laws,
Who was the first of Britain which did put
His brows within a golden crown, and called
Himself a king.

LUC. I am sorry, Cymbeline,
That I am to pronounce Augustus Cæsar—
Cæsar, that hath moe kings his servants than
Thyself domestic officers—thine enemy.
Receive it from me, then: war and confusion
In Cæsar's name pronounce I 'gainst thee: look
For fury not to be resisted. Thus defied,
I thank thee for myself.

CYM. Thou art welcome, Caius.
Thy Cæsar knighted me; my youth I spent
Much under him; of him I gathered honor;
Which he, to seek of me again, perforce,
Behoves me keep at utterance. I am perfect
That the Pannonians and Dalmatians for
Their liberties are now in arms; a precedent
Which not to read would show the Britons cold:
So Cæsar shall not find them.

LUC. Let proof speak.

CLO. His majesty bids you welcome. Make pastime with us a day or two, or

longer; if you seek us afterwards in other terms, you shall find us in our salt-water girdle; if you beat us out of it, it is yours; if you fall in the adventure, our crows shall fare the better for you; and there's an end. [140

Luc. So, sir!

Cym. I know your master's pleasure, and he mine:
All the remain is "Welcome!" [*Exeunt.*

Scene II

In a room in the palace, Pisanio *is reading a letter. It comes from* Posthumus, *and bids him slay* Imogen.

Pis. How! of adultery! Wherefore write you not
What monster's her accuser? Leonatus!
O master! what a strange infection
Is fall'n into thy ear! What false Italian—
As poisonous-tongued as handed—hath [10 prevailed
On thy too ready hearing? Disloyal! No:
She's punished for her truth, and undergoes,
More goddess-like than wife-like, such assaults
As would take in some virtue. O my master! [19
Thy mind to[2] her is now as low as were
Thy fortunes. How! that I should murder her?
Upon the love and truth and vows which I
Have made to thy command? I, her? her blood?
If it be so to do good service, never
Let me be counted serviceable. How look I, [29
That I should seem to lack humanity
So much as this fact comes to?—"Do't: the letter
That I have sent her, by her own command
Shall give thee opportunity." O damned paper!
Black as the ink that's on thee. Senseless bauble,
Art thou a fedary for this act, and look'st
So virgin-like without? Lo! here she [40 comes.
I am ignorant in what I am commanded.

Enter Imogen.

Imo. How now, Pisanio!

Pis. Madam, here is a letter from my lord.

Imo. Who? *thy* lord? that is *my* lord, Leonatus.
O! learned indeed were that astronomer
That knew the stars as I his characters;
He'd lay the future open.—You good [51 gods,
Let what is here contained relish of love,
Of my lord's health, of his content; yet not
That we two are asunder; let that grieve him—
Some griefs are med'cinable; that is one of them,
For it doth physic love—of his content, [60
All but in that! Good wax, thy leave. [*Breaks the seal.*] Bless'd be
You bees that make these locks of counsel! Lovers
And men in dangerous bonds pray not alike;
Though forfeiters you cast in prison, yet
You clasp young Cupid's tables. Good news, gods!
"Justice, and your father's wrath, [70 should he take me in his dominion, could not be so cruel to me, as you, O the dearest of creatures, would even renew me with your eyes. [3] Take notice that I am in Cambria, at Milford-Haven; what your own love will out of this advise you, follow. So he wishes you all happiness that remains loyal to his vow, and your, increasing in love, [79
Leonatus Posthumus."
O! for a horse with wings! Hear'st thou, Pisanio?
He is at Milford-Haven; read, and tell me
How far 'tis thither. If one of mean affairs
May plod it in a week, why may not I

[2] compared to.

[3] This sentence may be corrupt.

Glide thither in a day? Then, true Pisanio,
Who long'st, like me, to see thy lord; who long'st—
O! let me bate—but not like me; yet long'st,
But in´a fainter kind: O! not like me,
For mine's beyond beyond; say, and speak thick—
Love's counsellor should fill the bores of hearing,
To th' smothering of the sense—how far it is
To this same blessëd Milford; and, by th' way,
Tell me how Wales was made so happy as
T' inherit such a haven; but, first of all,
How we may steal from hence, and, for the gap
That we shall make in time, from our hence-going
And our return, to excuse; but first, how get hence.
Why should excuse be born or ere begot?
We'll talk of that hereafter. Prithee, speak,
How many score of miles may we well ride
'Twixt hour and hour?

PIS. One score 'twixt sun and sun,
Madam, 's enough for you, and too much too.

IMO. Why, one that rode to's execution, man,
Could never go so slow: I have heard of riding-wagers,
Where horses have been nimbler than the sands
That run i' th' clock's behalf. But this is fool'ry;
Go bid my woman feign a sickness; say
She'll home to her father; and provide me presently
A riding-suit, no costlier than would fit
A franklin's housewife.

PIS. Madam, you're best consider.

IMO. I see before me, man; nor here, nor here,
Nor what ensues, but have a fog in them
That I cannot look through. Away, I prithee;
Do as I bid thee. There's no more to say;
Accessible is none but Milford way.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

In a cave in a mountainous district in Wales live BELARIUS *(under the name of Morgan) and the two lads whom he stole from* CYMBELINE *and who suppose themselves to be his sons. They come forth from their low-arched cave to greet the morning sun.*

BEL. A goodly day not to keep house, with such
Whose roof's as low as ours! Stoop, boys; this gate
Instructs you how t' adore the heavens, and bows you
To a morning's holy office; the gates of monarchs
Are arched so high that giants may jet through
And keep their impious turbans on, without
Good morrow to the sun.—Hail, thou fair heaven!
We house i' th' rock, yet use thee not so hardly
As prouder livers do.

GUI. Hail, heaven!

ARV. Hail, heaven!

BEL. Now for our mountain sport. Up to yond hill;
Your legs are young; I'll tread these flats. Consider,
When you above perceive me, like a crow,
That it is place which lessens and sets off;
And you may then revolve what tales I have told you
Of courts, of princes, of the tricks in war;
This service is not service, so being done,
But being so allowed; to apprehend thus
Draws us a profit from all things we see,
And often, to our comfort, shall we find
The sharded beetle in a safer hold
Than is the full-winged eagle. O! this life
Is nobler than attending for a check,[4]

[4] doing service that wins nothing but a rebuke.

Richer than doing nothing for a bribe,[5]
Prouder than rustling in unpaid-for silk;
Such gain the cap of him that makes 'em fine,
Yet keeps his book uncrossed; no life to ours! [51
GUI. Out of your proof you speak; we, poor unfledged,
Have never winged from view o' th' nest, nor know not
What air's from home. Haply this life is best,
If quiet life be best; sweeter to you
That have a sharper known, well corresponding [60
With your stiff age; but unto us it is
A cell of ignorance, travelling a-bed,
A prison for a debtor, that not dares
To stride a limit.
ARV. What should we speak of
When we are old as you? when we shall hear
The rain and wind beat dark December, how [69
In this our pinching cave shall we discourse
The freezing hours away? We have seen nothing;
We are beastly, subtle as the fox for prey,
Like warlike as the wolf for what we eat;
Our valor is to chase what flies; our cage
We make a quire, as doth the prisoned bird, [79
And sing our bondage freely.
BEL. How you speak!
Did you but know the city's usuries
And felt them knowingly; the art o' th' court,
As hard to leave as keep, whose top to climb
Is certain falling, or so slipp'ry that
The fear's as bad as falling; the toil o' th' war, [89
A pain that only seems to seek out danger
I' th' name of fame and honor; which dies i' th' search,
And hath as oft a sland'rous epitaph
As record of fair act; nay, many times,
Doth ill deserve by doing well; what's worse,
Must curtsy at the censure: O boys! this story [99
The world may read in me; my body's marked
With Roman swords, and my report was once
First with the best of note; Cymbeline loved me,
And, when a soldier was the theme, my name
Was not far off; then was I as a tree
Whose boughs did bend with fruit, but, in one night, [110
A storm or robbery, call it what you will,
Shook down my mellow hangings, nay, my leaves,
And left me bare to weather.
GUI. Uncertain favor!
BEL. My fault being nothing—as I have told you oft—
But that two villains, whose false oaths prevailed
Before my perfect honor, swore to Cymbeline [121
I was confederate with the Romans; so
Followed my banishment, and this twenty years
This rock and these demesnes have been my world,
Where I have lived at honest freedom, paid
More pious debts to heaven than in all
The fore-end of my time.—But up to th' mountains! [131
This is not hunter's language. He that strikes
The venison first shall be the lord o' th' feast;
To him the other two shall minister;
And we will fear no poison which attends
In place of greater state. I'll meet you in the valleys. [*Exeunt* GUIDERIUS *and* ARVIRAGUS. [141
How hard it is to hide the sparks of nature!
These boys know little they are sons to th' king;

[5] B, babe.

Nor Cymbeline dreams that they are alive.
They think they are mine; and, though trained up thus meanly
I' th' cave wherein they bow, their thoughts do hit
The roofs of palaces, and nature prompts them
In simple and low things to prince it much
Beyond the trick of others. This Polydore,
The heir of Cymbeline and Britain, who
The king his father called Guiderius—Jove!
When on my three-foot stool I sit and tell
The warlike feats I have done, his spirits fly out
Into my story: say, "Thus mine enemy fell,
And thus I set my foot on's neck;" even then
The princely blood flows in his cheek, he sweats,
Strains his young nerves, and puts himself in posture
That acts my words. The younger brother, Cadwal,
Once Arviragus, in as like a figure,
Strikes life into my speech and shows much more
His own conceiving. Hark! the game is roused.—
O Cymbeline! heaven and my conscience knows
Thou didst unjustly banish me; whereon,
At three and two years old, I stole these babes,
Thinking to bar thee of succession, as
Thou refts me of my lands. Euriphile,
Thou wast their nurse; they took thee for their mother,
And every day do honor to thy[6] grave:
Myself, Belarius, that am Morgan called,
They take for natural father.—The game is up. [*Exit.*

Scene IV

PISANIO *has brought* IMOGEN *safely into the neighborhood of Milford-Haven, and* IMOGEN *is impatient to see her husband.*

IMO. Thou told'st me, when we came from horse, the place
Was near at hand: ne'er longed my mother so
To see me first, as I have now. Pisanio! man!
Where is Posthumus? What is in thy mind,
That makes thee stare thus? Wherefore breaks that sigh
From th' inward of thee? One but painted thus
Would be interpreted a thing perplexed
Beyond self-explication; put thyself
Into a havior of less fear, ere wildness
Vanquish my staider senses. What's the matter? [PISANIO *silently hands her a paper.*
Why tender'st thou that paper to me with
A look untender? If't be summer news,
Smile to't before; if winterly, thou need'st
But keep that count'nance still. [*She looks at the letter.*] My husband's hand!
That drug-damned Italy hath outcraftied him,
And he's at some hard point.—Speak, man; thy tongue
May take off some extremity, which to read
Would be even mortal to me.
PIS. Please you, read;
And you shall find me, wretched man, a thing
The most disdained of fortune.

IMO. "Thy mistress, Pisanio, hath played the strumpet in my bed, the testimony whereof lies bleeding in me. I speak not out of weak surmises, but from proof as strong as my grief and as certain as I expect my revenge. That part thou, Pisanio, must act for me, if thy faith be not tainted with the breach of hers. Let thine own hands take away her life; I shall give thee opportunity at Milford-Haven; she hath my let-

[6] B, "her," which is probably what Shakespeare wrote.

ter for the purpose; where, if thou fear
to strike, and to make me certain it is
done, thou art the pandar to her dis-
honor and equally to me disloyal."
PIS. <What shall I need to draw my
sword? the paper
Hath cut her throat already. No, 'tis
slander, [60
Whose edge is sharper than the sword,
whose tongue
Outvenoms all the worms[7] of Nile, whose
breath
Rides on the posting winds and doth belie
All corners of the world; kings, queens,
and states,[8]
Maids, matrons, nay, the secrets of the
grave
This viperous slander enters.> What
cheer, madam? [71
IMO. False to his bed! What is it to
be false?
To lie in watch there and to think on
him?
To weep 'twixt clock and clock? if sleep
charge nature,
To break it with a fearful dream of him,
And cry myself awake? that's false to's
bed, is it? [80
PIS. Alas! good lady.
IMO. I false! Thy conscience witness!
Iachimo,
Thou didst accuse him of incontinency;
Thou then look'dst like a villain; now
methinks
Thy favor's good enough.—Some jay of
Italy,
Whose mother was her painting, hath
betrayed him: [90
Poor I am stale, a garment out of
fashion,
And, for I am richer than to hang by th'
walls,
I must be ripped. To pieces with
me!—O!
Men's vows are women's traitors! All
good seeming,
By thy revolt, O husband! shall be
thought [100
Put on for villany; not born where't
grows,
But worn a bait for ladies.
PIS. Good madam, hear me.
IMO. True honest men being heard,
like false Æneas,
Were in his time thought false, and
Sinon's weeping
Did scandal many a holy tear, took pity
From most true wretchedness; so thou,
Posthumus, [111
Wilt lay the leaven on all proper men;
Goodly and gallant shall be false and per-
jured
From thy great fail.—Come, fellow, be
thou honest;
Do thou thy master's bidding. When
thou seest him,
A little witness my obedience; look!
I draw the sword myself; take it, and hit
The innocent mansion of my love, [121
my heart.
Fear not, 'tis empty of all things but
grief;
Thy master is not there, who was in-
deed
The riches of it: do his bidding; strike.
Thou mayst be valiant in a better cause,
But now thou seem'st a coward.
PIS. Hence, vile instrument! [130
Thou shalt not damn my hand.
IMO. Why, I must die;
And if I do not by thy hand, thou art
No servant of thy master's. Against self-
slaughter
There is a prohibition so divine
That cravens my weak hand. Come,
here's my heart.—
Something's afore't; soft, soft! we'll no
defence; [140
Obedient as the scabbard. What is here?
[*Takes from her breast a packet of
letters.*
The scriptures of the loyal Leonatus,
All turned to heresy! Away, away!
Corrupters of my faith; you shall no
more
Be stomachers to my heart. Thus may
poor fools
Believe false teachers; though those that
are betrayed [151
Do feel the treason sharply, yet the
traitor

[7] serpents.
[8] the nobility.

Stands in worse case of woe.—
And thou, Posthumus, thou that didst set up
My disobedience 'gainst the king my father,
And make me put into contempt the suits
Of princely fellows, shalt hereafter find
It is no act of common passage, but [161
A strain of rareness; and I grieve myself
To think, when thou shalt be disedged[9] by her
That now thou tirest[10] on, how thy memory
Will then be panged by me.—Prithee, dispatch;
The lamb entreats the butcher; where's thy knife? [170
Thou art too slow to do thy master's bidding,
When I desire it too.
PIS. O, gracious lady!
Since I received command to do this business
I have not slept one wink.
IMO. Do't, and to bed then.
PIS. I'll wake mine eyeballs [blind] first. [180
IMO. Wherefore then
Didst undertake it? Why hast thou abused
So many miles with a pretence? this place?
Mine action and thine own? our horses' labor?
The time inviting thee? the perturbed court,
For my being absent?—whereunto I never [191
Purpose return.—Why hast thou gone so far,
To be unbent when thou hast ta'en thy stand,
Th' elected deer before thee?
PIS. But to win time
To lose so bad employment, in the which
I have considered of a course. Good lady, [200
Hear me with patience.
IMO. Talk thy tongue weary; speak:
I have heard I am a strumpet, and mine ear,

[9] surfeited. [10] gorgest.

Therein false struck, can take no greater wound,
Nor tent[11] to bottom that. But speak.
PIS. Then, madam,
I thought you would not back again.
IMO. Most like, [210
Bringing me here to kill me.
PIS. Not so, neither;
But if I were as wise as honest, then
My purpose would prove well. It cannot be
But that my master is abused; some villain,
Some villain, ay, and singular in his art,
Hath done you both this cursëd injury.
IMO. Some Roman courtezan. [220
PIS. No, on my life.
I'll give but notice you are dead and send him
Some bloody sign of it; for 'tis commanded
I should do so: you shall be missed at court,
And that will well confirm it.
IMO. Why, good fellow,
What shall I do the while? where bide? how live? [231
Or in my life what comfort, when I am
Dead to my husband?
PIS. If you'll back to th' court—
IMO. No court, no father; nor no more ado
With that harsh, noble, simple nothing,
Cloten!
That Cloten, whose love-suit hath been to me [240
As fearful as a siege.
PIS. If not at court,
Then not in Britain must you bide.
IMO. Where then?
Hath Britain all the sun that shines? Day, night,
Are they not but in Britain? I' th' world's volume
Our Britain seems as of it, but not in't;
In a great pool a swan's nest: prithee, think [251
There's livers out of Britain.
PIS. I am most glad

[11] probe.

You think of other place. Th' ambassador,
Lucius the Roman, comes to Milford-Haven
To-morrow; now, if you could wear a mind
Dark as your fortune is, and but disguise
That which, t' appear itself, must [261
not yet be
But by self-danger, you should tread a course
Pretty and full of view; yea, haply, near
The residence of Posthumus; so nigh at least
That, though his actions were not visible, yet
Report should render him hourly to your ear [271
As truly as he moves.

IMO. O! for such means:
Though peril to my modesty, not death on't,
I would adventure.

PIS. Well, then, here's the point:
You must forget to be a woman; change
Command into obedience; fear and niceness [12]— [280
The handmaids of all women, or more truly
Woman it [13] pretty self—into a waggish courage;
Ready in gibes, quick-answered, saucy, and
As quarrelous as the weasel; nay, you must
Forget that rarest treasure of your cheek,
Exposing it—but, O! the harder heart,
Alack! no remedy—to the greedy touch
Of common-kissing Titan, and forget [292
Your laborsome and dainty trims, wherein
You made great Juno angry.

IMO. Nay, be brief:
I see into thy end, and am almost
A man already.

PIS. First, make yourself but like one. [300
Forethinking this, I have already fit—
'Tis in my cloak-bag—doublet, hat, hose, all
That answer to them; would you in their serving,
And with what imitation you can borrow
From youth of such a season, fore noble Lucius
Present yourself, desire his service, tell him [310
Wherein you're happy—which you'll make him know,
If that his head have ear in music—doubtless
With joy he will embrace you, for he's honorable,
And, doubling that, most holy. Your means abroad,
You have me, rich; and I will never fail
Beginning nor supplyment. [320

IMO. Thou art all the comfort
The gods will diet me with. Prithee, away;
There's more to be considered, but we'll even
All that good time will give us; this attempt
I am soldier to, and will abide it with
A prince's courage. Away, I prithee.

PIS. Well, madam, we must take a short farewell, [331
Lest, being missed, I be suspected of
Your carriage from the court. My noble mistress,
Here is a box, I had it from the queen,
What's in't is precious; if you are sick at sea,
Or stomach-qualmed at land, a dram of this
Will drive away distemper. To some shade, [341
And fit you to your manhood. May the gods
Direct you to the best!

IMO. Amen! I thank thee. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V

LUCIUS *must have stayed a couple of days* [14] *at the court of* CYMBELINE, *but he is now about to depart.* CYMBELINE, *attended, the* QUEEN, CLOTEN, *and the Lords are bidding farewell to him.*

[12] coyness.
[13] its.
[14] But already he has had time to hear from Augustus. Here again we have an utter lack of consistency as regards time.

CYM. Thus far; and so farewell!
LUC. Thanks, royal sir.
My emperor hath wrote I must from hence; [9
And am right sorry that I must report ye
My master's enemy.
CYM. Our subjects, sir,
Will not endure his yoke; and for ourself
To show less sovereignty than they must needs
Appear unkinglike.
LUC. So, sir: I desire of you
A conduct over land to Milford-Haven.—
Madam, all joy befall your Grace. [20
QUEEN. And you! [15]
CYM. My lords, you are appointed for that office;
The due of honor in no point omit.—
So, farewell, noble Lucius!
LUC., *to* CLOTEN. Your hand, my lord.
CLO. Receive it friendly; but from this time forth
I wear it as your enemy.
LUC. Sir, the event [30
Is yet to name the winner. Fare you well.
CYM. Leave not the worthy Lucius, good my lords,
Till he have crossed the Severn.—Happiness! [*Exeunt* LUCIUS *and Lords.*
QUEEN. He goes hence frowning; but it honors us
That we have given him cause.
CLO. 'Tis all the better; [40
Your valiant Britons have their wishes in it.
CYM. Lucius hath wrote already to the emperor
How it goes here. It fits us therefore ripely
Our chariots and horsemen be in readiness;
The pow'rs that he already hath in Gallia
Will soon be drawn to head, from whence he moves [51
His war for Britain.
QUEEN. 'Tis not sleepy business;
But must be looked to speedily and strongly.

[15] In F, part of Lucius' speech.

CYM. Our expectation that it would be thus
Hath made us forward. But, my gentle queen,
Where is our daughter? She hath not appeared [61
Before the Roman, nor to us hath tendered
The duty of the day; she looks us like
A thing more made of malice than of duty:
We have noted it.—Call her before us, for
We have been too slight in sufferance.
[*Exit an Attendant.* [70
QUEEN. Royal sir,
Since the exile of Posthumus, most retired
Hath her life been; the cure whereof, my lord,
'Tis time must do. Beseech your majesty,
Forbear sharp speeches to her; she's a lady
So tender of rebukes that words are strokes, [81
And strokes death to her.

Re-enter Attendant.

CYM. Where is she, sir? How
Can her contempt be answered?
ATTEN. Please you, sir,
Her chambers are all locked, and there's no answer
That will be given to th' loudest noise we make. [90
QUEEN. My lord, when last I went to visit her,
She prayed me to excuse her keeping close,
Whereto constrained by her infirmity,
She should that duty leave unpaid to you
Which daily she was bound to proffer; this
She wished me to make known, but our great court [101
Made me to blame in memory.
CYM. Her doors locked!
Not seen of late! Grant, heavens, that which I fear

Prove false! [*Exit, followed by Attendants.*
QUEEN. Son, I say, follow the king.
CLO. That man of hers, Pisanio, her old servant,
I have not seen these two days.
QUEEN. Go, look after.
[*Exit* CLOTEN.
Pisanio, thou that stand'st so for Posthumus!
He hath a drug of mine; I pray his absence
Proceed by swallowing that, for he believes
It is a thing most precious. But, for her,
Where is she gone? Haply, despair hath seized her,
Or, winged with fervor of her love, she's flown
To her desired Posthumus. Gone she is
To death or to dishonor, and my end
Can make good use of either; she being down,
I have the placing of the British crown.

Re-enter CLOTEN.

How now, my son?
CLO. 'Tis certain she is fled.
Go in and cheer the king; he rages, none
Dare come about him.
QUEEN. <All the better; may
This night forestall him of the coming day!>
[*Exit.*
CLO. I love and hate her; for she's fair and royal,
And that she hath all courtly parts more exquisite
Than lady, ladies, woman; from every one
The best she hath, and she, of all compounded,
Outsells them all. I love her therefore; but
Disdaining me and throwing favors on
The low Posthumus slanders so her judgment
That what's else rare is choked, and in that point
I will conclude to hate her, nay, indeed,
To be revenged upon her. For, when fools
Shall—

Enter PISANIO.

Who is here? What! are you packing, sirrah?
Come hither. Ah, you precious pander! Villain,
Where is thy lady? In a word; or else
Thou art straightway with the fiends.
PIS. O! good my lord!
CLO., *drawing his sword.* Where is thy lady? or, by Jupiter,
I will not ask again. Close villain,
I'll have this secret from thy heart, or rip
Thy heart to find it. Is she with Posthumus,
From whose so many weights of baseness cannot
A dram of worth be drawn?
PIS. Alas! my lord,
How can she be with him? When was she missed?
He is in Rome.
CLO. Where is she, sir? Come nearer,
No farther halting; satisfy me home
What is become of her?
PIS. O! my all-worthy lord!
CLO. All-worthy villain!
Discover where thy mistress is at once,
At the next word; no more of "worthy lord!"
Speak, or thy silence on the instant is
Thy condemnation and thy death.
PIS., *presenting a letter which he has concocted to account for* IMOGEN'S *flight.* Then, sir,
This paper is the history of my knowledge
Touching her flight.
CLO. Let's see't. I will pursue her
Even to Augustus' throne.
PIS. <Or this or perish.
She's far enough; and what he learns by this
May prove his travel, not her danger.>
CLO. Hum!
PIS. <I'll write to my lord she's dead. O Imogen!
Safe mayst thou wander, safe return again!>
CLO. Sirrah, is this letter true?

Pis. Sir, as I think.

Clo. It is Posthumus' hand; I know't. —Sirrah, if thou wouldst not be a vil- [210
lain, but do me true service, undergo [16] those employments wherein I should have cause to use thee with a serious industry, that is, what villany soe'er I bid thee do, to perform it directly and truly, I would think thee an honest man; thou shouldst neither want my means for thy relief nor my voice for thy preferment.

Pis. Well, my good lord. [219

Clo. Wilt thou serve me? for, since patiently and constantly thou hast stuck to the bare fortune of that beggar Posthumus, thou canst not, in the course of gratitude, but be a diligent follower of mine. Wilt thou serve me?

Pis. Sir, I will.

Clo. Give me thy hand; here's my purse. Hast any of thy late master's garments in thy possession? [229

Pis. I have, my lord, at my lodging, the same suit he wore when he took leave of my lady and mistress.

Clo. The first service thou dost me, fetch that suit hither: let it be thy first service; go.

Pis. I shall, my lord. [*Exit.*

Clo. Meet thee at Milford-Haven!—I forgot to ask him one thing; I'll remember't anon—even there, thou villain Posthumus, will I kill thee. I would these [240
garments were come. She said upon a time—the bitterness of it I now belch from my heart—that she held the very garment of Posthumus in more respect than my noble and natural person, together with the adornment of my qualities. With that suit upon my back will I ravish her: first kill him, and in her eyes; there shall she see my valor, which will then be a torment to her con- [250
tempt. He on the ground, my speech of insultment ended on his dead body, and when my lust hath dined—which, as I say, to vex her, I will execute in the clothes that she so praised—to the court I'll knock her back, foot her home again. She hath despised me rejoicingly, and I'll be merry in my revenge.

[16] undertake.

Re-enter Pisanio, *with the clothes.*

Be those the garments? [260

Pis. Ay, my noble lord.

Clo. How long is't since she went to Milford-Haven?

Pis. She can scarce be there yet.

Clo. Bring this apparel to my chamber; that is the second thing that I have commanded thee: the third is, that thou wilt be a voluntary mute to my design. Be but duteous, and true preferment shall tender itself to thee.—My [270
revenge is now at Milford; would I had wings to follow it! Come, and be true. [*Exit.*

Pis. Thou bidd'st me to my loss; for true to thee
Were to prove false, which I will never be,
To him that is most true. To Milford go,
And find not her whom thou pursu'st. Flow, flow, [281
You heavenly blessings, on her! This fool's speed
Be crossed with slowness; labor be his meed! [*Exit.*

Scene VI

Imogen, *in her boy's suit, has wandered about in the mountains, foodless, and now has come before the cave of* Belarius, *which she does not yet perceive.*

Imo. I see a man's life is a tedious one;
I have tired myself, and for two nights together
Have made the ground my bed; I should be sick [10
But that my resolution helps me. Milford,
When from the mountain-top Pisanio showed thee,
Thou wast within a ken. O Jove! I think
Foundations fly the wretched; such, I mean,
Where they should be relieved. Two beggars told me [20
I could not miss my way; will poor folks lie,

That have afflictions on them, knowing 'tis
A punishment or trial? Yes; no wonder,
When rich ones scarce tell true. To lapse in fulness
Is sorer than to lie for need, and falsehood [30
Is worse in kings than beggars.—My dear lord!
Thou art one o' th' false ones. Now I think on thee,
My hunger's gone, but even before I was
At point to sink for food.—But what is this?
Here is a path to't; 'tis some savage hold;
I were best not call, I dare not call, yet famine, [41
Ere clean it o'erthrow nature, makes it valiant.
Plenty and peace breeds cowards, hardness ever
Of hardiness is mother. [*Calling.*] Ho! Who's here?
If any thing that's civil, speak; if savage,
Take or lend. Ho!—No answer? Then I'll enter. [51
Best draw my sword; and, if mine enemy
But fear the sword like me, he'll scarcely look on't.
Such a foe, good heavens! [*Exit to the cave.*

A few minutes later, enter Belarius, Guiderius, *and* Arviragus.

Bel. You, Polydore, have proved best woodman,[17] and [60
Are master of the feast; Cadwal and I
Will play the cook and servant, 'tis our match;
The sweat of industry would dry and die
But for the end it works to. Come; our stomachs
Will make what's homely savory; weariness
Can snore upon the flint when resty sloth
Finds the down pillow hard.—Now, peace be here, [71
Poor house, that keep'st thyself!

[17] hunter.

Gui. I am throughly weary.
Arv. I am weak with toil, yet strong in appetite.
Gui. There is cold meat i' th' cave; we'll browse on that,
Whilst what we have killed be cooked.
Bel., *looking into the cave.* Stay; come not in; [80
But that it eats our victuals, I should think
Here were a fairy.
Gui. What's the matter, sir?
Bel. By Jupiter, an angel! or, if not,
An earthly paragon! Behold divineness
No elder than a boy!

Re-enter Imogen.

Imo. Good masters, harm me not:
Before I entered here, I called, and thought [91
To have begged or bought what I have took. Good troth,
I have stol'n nought, nor would not, though I had found
Gold strewed i' th' floor. Here's money for my meat;
I would have left it on the board so soon
As I had made my meal, and parted
With pray'rs for the provider. [100
Gui. Money, youth?
Arv. All gold and silver rather turn to dirt!
As 'tis no better reckoned but of those
Who worship dirty gods.
Imo. I see you're angry.
Know, if you kill me for my fault, I should
Have died had I not made it.
Bel. Whither bound? [110
Imo. To Milford-Haven.
Bel. What's your name?
Imo. Fidele, sir. I have a kinsman who
Is bound for Italy; he embarks[18] at Milford;
To whom being going, almost spent with hunger,
I am fall'n in this offence.
Bel. Prithee, fair youth,
Think us no churls, nor measure our good minds [121

[18] B. embarked.

By this rude place we live in. Well encountered!
'Tis almost night; you shall have better cheer
Ere you depart, and thanks to stay and eat it.
Boys, bid him welcome.
GUI. Were you a woman, youth,
I should woo hard but be your groom. In honesty,
I bid for you, as I do buy.
ARV. I'll make't my comfort
He is a man; I'll love him as my brother;
And such a welcome as I'd give to him
After a long absence, such is yours; most welcome!
Be sprightly, for you fall 'mongst friends.
IMO. 'Mongst friends,
If brothers. <Would it had been so, that they
Had been my father's sons; then had my prize
Been less, and so more equal ballasting
To thee, Posthumus.>
BEL. <He wrings at some distress.
GUI. Would I could free't!
ARV. Or I, whate'er it be,
What pain it cost, what danger. Gods!
BEL. Hark, boys.>
[*The three men whisper.*
IMO. <Great men,
That had a court no bigger than this cave,
That did attend themselves and had the virtue
Which their own conscience sealed them —laying by
That nothing-gift of differing multitudes—
Could not out-peer these twain. Pardon me, gods!
I'd change my sex to be companion with them,
Since Leonatus' false.>
MEL. It shall be so.
Boys, we'll go dress our hunt.—Fair youth, come in:
Discourse is heavy, fasting; when we have supped,
We'll mannerly demand thee of thy story,
So far as thou wilt speak it.

GUI. Pray, draw near.
ARV. The night to th' owl and morn to th' lark less welcome.
IMO. Thanks, sir.
ARV. I pray, draw near. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII

In a public place in Rome two SENATORS *are explaining to the* TRIBUNES *the Emperor's writ as to war against Britain.*

1 SEN. This is the tenor of the emperor's writ:
That since the common men are now in action
'Gainst the Pannonians and Dalmatiäns,
And that the legions now in Gallia are
Full weak to undertake our wars against
The fall'n-off Britons, that we do incite
The gentry to this business. He creates
Lucius pro-consul; and to you the tribunes,
For this immediate levy, he commends
His absolute commission. Long live Cæsar!
1 TRI. Is Lucius general of the forces?
2 SEN. Ay.
1 TRI. Remaining now in Gallia?
1 SEN. With those legions
Which I have spoke of, whereunto your levy
Must be supplyant; [19] the words of your commission
Will tie you to the numbers and the time
Of their dispatch.
1 TRI. We will discharge our duty.

ACT FOUR

SCENE I

CLOTEN, *travelling on the false directions of* PISANIO, *has arrived at a forest near the cave of* BELARIUS.

CLO. I am near to the place where they should meet, if Pisanio have mapped it truly. How fit his garments serve me! Why should his mistress, who was made by Him that made the tailor, not be fit too? the rather, saving reverence of the word, for 'tis said a woman's fitness comes by fits. Therein I must play the

[19] supplementary.

workman. I dare speak it to myself—for it is not vain-glory, for a man and his glass to confer in his own chamber—I mean, the lines of my body are as well drawn as his; no less young, more strong, not beneath him in fortunes, beyond him in the advantage of the time, above him in birth, alike conversant in general services, and more remarkable in single op- [20
positions; [1] yet this imperceiverant thing loves him in my despite. What mortality is! Posthumus, thy head, which now is growing upon thy shoulders, shall within this hour be off, thy mistress enforced, thy garments cut to pieces before thy face; and, all this done, spurn her home to her father, who may haply be a little angry for my so rough usage, but my mother, having power of his testi- [30
ness, shall turn all into my commendations. My horse is tied up safe; out, sword, and to a sore purpose! Fortune, put them into my hand! This is the very description of their meeting-place; and the fellow dares not deceive me. [*Exit.*

Scene II

BELARIUS, GUIDERIUS, ARVIRAGUS, *and* IMOGEN *come forth from the cave. It is about* 9 *o'clock in the morning.*

BEL., *to* IMOGEN. You are not well; remain here in the cave;
We'll come to you after hunting.
ARV., *to* IMOGEN. Brother, stay here;
Are we not brothers?
IMO. So man and man should be,
But clay and clay differs in dignity, [10
Whose dust is both alike. I am very sick.
GUI., *to the others.* Go you to hunting; I'll abide with him.
IMO. So sick I am not, yet I am not well;
But not a citizen so wanton [2] as
To seem to die ere sick. So please you, leave me;
Stick to your journal [3] course; the [20
breach of custom
Is breach of all. I am ill; but your being by me
Cannot amend me; society is no comfort
To one not sociable. I am not very sick,
Since I can reason of it; pray you, trust me here,
I'll rob none but myself, and let me die,
Stealing so poorly.
GUI. I love thee; I have spoke it; [30
How much the quantity, the weight as much,
As I do love my father.
BEL. What! how! how!
ARV. If it be sin to say so, sir, I yoke me
In my good brother's fault: I know not why
I love this youth; and I have heard you say, [40
Love's reason's without reason: the bier at door,
And a demand who is't shall die, I'd say
"My father, not this youth."
BEL. <O noble strain!
O worthiness of nature! breed of greatness!
Cowards father cowards, and base things sire base;
Nature hath meal and bran, contempt [50
and grace.
I'm not their father; yet who this should be
Doth miracle itself, loved before me.>
'Tis the ninth hour o' th' morn.
ARV. Brother, farewell.
IMO. I wish ye sport.
ARV. You health.—So please you, sir.
IMO. <These are kind creatures. Gods, what lies I have heard! [61
Our courtiers say all's savage but at court:
Experience, O! thou disprov'st report.
Th' imperious seas breed monsters, for the dish
Poor tributary rivers as sweet fish.
I am sick still, heart-sick.—Pisanio,
I'll now taste of thy drug.> [*Swallows some.* [70
GUI. <I could not stir him;
He said he was gentle, but unfortunate;
Dishonestly afflicted, but yet honest.

[1] combats. [2] B, so citizen a wanton.
[3] daily.

ARV. Thus did he answer me, yet said, hereafter
I might know more.>
BEL. To th' field, to th' field!
[*To* IMOGEN.] We'll leave you for this time; go in and rest.
ARV. We'll not be long away.
BEL. Pray, be not sick,
For you must be our housewife.
IMO. Well or ill,
I am bound to you.
BEL. And shalt be ever.
[*Exit* IMOGEN.
This youth, howe'er distressed, appears he hath had
Good ancestors.
ARV. How angel-like he sings!
GUI. But his neat cookery! he cut our roots
In characters,
And sauced our broths as Juno had been sick,
And he her dieter.
ARV. Nobly he yokes
A smiling with a sigh, as if the sigh
Was that it was for not being such a smile;
The smile mocking the sigh, that it would fly
From so divine a temple, to commix
With winds that sailors rail at.
GUI. I do note
That grief and patience, rooted in him, both
Mingle their spurs together.
ARV. Grow, patience!
And let the stinking-elder, grief, untwine
His perishing root with the increasing vine!
BEL. It is great morning. Come, away!—Who's there?

Enter CLOTEN.

CLO. I cannot find those runagates; that villain
Hath mocked me. I am faint.
BEL. <"Those runagates!"
Means he not us? I partly know him; 'tis
Cloten, the son o' th' queen. I fear some ambush.
I saw him not these many years, and yet
I know 'tis he.—We are held as outlaws: hence!
GUI. He is but one. You and my brother search
What companies are near; pray you, away;
Let me alone with him.> [*Exeunt* BELARIUS *and* ARVIRAGUS.
CLO. Soft! What are you
That fly me thus? some villain mountaineers?[4]
I have heard of such.—What slave art thou?
GUI. A thing
More slavish did I ne'er than answering
A "slave" without a knock.
CLO. Thou art a robber,
A law-breaker, a villain. Yield thee, thief.
GUI. To who? to thee? What art thou? Have not I
An arm as big as thine? a heart as big?
Thy words, I grant, are bigger, for I wear not
My dagger in my mouth. Say what thou art,
Why I should yield to thee?
CLO. Thou villain base,
Know'st me not by my clothes?
GUI. No, nor thy tailor, rascal,
Who is thy grandfather: he made those clothes,
Which, as it seems, make thee.
CLO. Thou precious varlet,
My tailor made them not.
GUI. Hence then, and thank
The man that gave them thee. Thou art some fool;
I am loath to beat thee.
CLO. Thou injurious thief,
Hear but my name, and tremble.
GUI. What's thy name?
CLO. Cloten, thou villain.
GUI. Cloten, thou double villain, be thy name,
I cannot tremble at it; were it Toad, or Adder, Spider,
'Twould move me sooner.

[4] B, "mountainers"; but as "mountaineers" is the invariable form elsewhere in the play, this is probably a misprint.

CLO. To thy further fear,
Nay, to thy mere confusion, thou shalt know
I am son to th' queen.
GUI. I'm sorry for't, not seeming
So worthy as thy birth.
CLO. Art not afeard?
GUI. Those that I reverence those I fear, the wise;
At fools I laugh, not fear them.
CLO. Die the death:
When I have slain thee with my proper hand,
I'll follow those that even now fled hence,
And on the gates of Lud's town set your heads:
Yield, rustic mountaineer. [*Exeunt fighting.*

Re-enter BELARIUS *and* ARVIRAGUS.

BEL. No companies abroad?
ARV. None in the world. You did mistake him, sure.
BEL. I cannot tell; long is it since I saw him,
But time hath nothing blurred those lines of favor
Which then he wore; the snatches in his voice
And burst of speaking were as his. I am absolute
'Twas very Cloten.
ARV. In this place we left them:
I wish my brother make good time with him,
You say he is so fell.
BEL. Being scarce made up,
I mean, to man, he had not apprehension
Of roaring terrors; for defect of judgment
Is oft the cause of fear. But see, thy brother.

Re-enter GUIDERIUS, *with* CLOTEN'S *head.*

GUI. This Cloten was a fool, an empty purse,
There was no money in't. Not Hercules
Could have knocked out his brains, for he had none;
Yet I not doing this, the fool had borne
My head as I do his.
BEL. What hast thou done?
GUI. I am perfect what: cut off one Cloten's head,
Son to the queen, after his own report;
Who called me traitor, mountaineer, and swore,
With his own single hand he'd take us in,
Displace our heads where—thanks the gods!—they grow,
And set them on Lud's town.
BEL. We are all undone.
GUI. Why, worthy father, what have we to lose
But that he swore to take, our lives? The law
Protects not us; then why should we be tender
To let an arrogant piece of flesh threat us,
Play judge and executioner all himself,
For we do fear the law? What company
Discover you abroad?
BEL. No single soul
Can we set eye on; but, in all safe reason,
He must have some attendants. Though his humor
Was nothing but mutation, ay, and that
From one bad thing to worse; not frenzy, not
Absolute madness could so far have raved
To bring him here alone. Although, perhaps,
It may be heard at court that such as we
Cave here, hunt here, are outlaws, and in time
May make some stronger head; the which he hearing—
As it is like him—might break out, and swear
He'd fetch us in; yet is't not probable
To come alone, either he so undertaking,
Or they so suffering; then on good ground we fear,
If we do fear this body hath a tail
More perilous than the head.
ARV. Let ordinance
Come as the gods foresay it; howsoe'er,

My brother hath done well.
BEL. I had no mind
To hunt this day; the boy Fidele's sickness
Did make my way long forth.
GUI. With his own sword,
Which he did wave against my throat, I have ta'en
His head from him; I'll throw't into the creek
Behind our rock, and let it to the sea,
And tell the fishes he's the queen's son, Cloten:
That's all I reck. [*Exit.*
BEL. I fear 'twill be revenged.
Would, Polydore, thou hadst not done't! though valor
Becomes thee well enough.
ARV. Would I had done't,
So the revenge alone pursued me! Polydore,
I love thee brotherly, but envy much
Thou hast robbed me of this deed; I would revenges,
That possible strength might meet, would seek us through
And put us to our answer.
BEL. Well, 'tis done.—
We'll hunt no more to-day, nor seek for danger
Where there's no profit. I prithee, to our rock;
You and Fidele play the cooks; I'll stay
Till hasty Polydore return, and bring him
To dinner presently.
ARV. Poor sick Fidele!
I'll willingly to him; to gain his color
I'd let a parish of such Clotens' blood,
And praise myself for charity. [*Goes into the cave.*
BEL. O thou goddess!
Thou divine Nature, how thyself thou blazon'st
In these two princely boys! They are as gentle
As zephyrs, blowing below the violet,
Not wagging his sweet head; and yet as rough,
Their royal blood enchafed, as the rud'st wind,
That by the top doth take the mountain pine,
And make him stoop to th' vale. 'Tis wonder
That an invisible instinct should frame them
To royalty unlearned, honor untaught,
Civility not seen from other, valor
That wildly grows in them, but yields a crop
As if it had been sowed! Yet still it's strange
What Cloten's being here to us portends,
Or what his death will bring us.

Re-enter GUIDERIUS.

GUI. Where's my brother?
I have sent Cloten's clotpoll down the stream,
In embassy to his mother; his body's hostage
For his return. [*Solemn music.*
BEL. My ingenuous[5] instrument!
Hark! Polydore, it sounds; but what occasion
Hath Cadwal now to give it motion? Hark!
GUI. Is he at home?
BEL. He went hence even now.
GUI. What does he mean? since death of my dear'st mother
It did not speak before. All solemn things
Should answer solemn accidents. The matter?
Triumphs for nothing and lamenting toys
Is jollity for apes and grief for boys.
Is Cadwal mad?

Re-enter ARVIRAGUS, *with* IMOGEN, *as dead, bearing her in his arms.*

BEL. Look! here he comes,
And brings the dire occasion in his arms
Of what we blame him for.
ARV. The bird is dead
That we have made so much on. I had rather
Have skipped from sixteen years of age to sixty,
To have turned my leaping-time into a crutch,

[5] ingenious.

Than have seen this.
GUI. O, sweetest, fairest lily!
My brother wears thee not the one half so well
As when thou grew'st thyself.
BEL. O melancholy!
Who ever yet could sound thy bottom? find [380
The ooze, to show what coast thy slug-gish c[r]are
Might easiliest harbor in?—Thou blessëd thing!
Jove knows what man thou mightst have made; but I,
Thou diedst a most rare boy, of melan-cholly.—
How found you him?
ARV. Stark, as you see: [390
Thus smiling, as some fly had tickled slumber,
Not as death's dart, being laughed at; his right cheek
Reposing on a cushion.
GUI. Where?
ARV. O' th' floor,
His arms thus leagued; I thought he slept, and put
My clouted brogues from off my feet, [400 whose rudeness
Answered my steps too loud.
GUI. Why, he but sleeps:
If he be gone, he'll make his grave a bed;
With female fairies will his tomb be haunted,
And worms will not come to him.[6]
ARV. With fairest flowers
While summer lasts and I live here, Fidele, [411
I'll sweeten thy sad grave; thou shalt not lack
The flower that's like thy face, pale prim-rose, nor
The azured hare-bell, like thy veins, no, nor
The leaf of eglantine, whom not to slan-der,
Out-sweetened not thy breath: the rud-dock would, [421
With charitable bill—O bill! sore-sham-ing
Those rich-left heirs, that let their fa-thers lie
Without a monument—bring thee all this;
Yea, and furred moss besides, when flowers are none,
To winter-ground thy corse. [430
GUI. Prithee, have done,
And do not play in wench-like words with that
Which is so serious. Let us bury him,
And not protract with admiration[7] what
Is now due debt. To th' grave!
ARV. Say! where shall's lay him?
GUI. By good Euriphile, our mother.
ARV. Be't so;
And let us, Polydore, though now our voices [441
Have got the mannish crack, sing him to th' ground,
As once our mother; use like note and words,
Save that "Euriphile" must be "Fidele."
GUI. Cadwal,
I cannot sing; I'll weep, and word it with thee;
For notes of sorrow out of tune are [450 worse
Than priests and fanes that lie.
ARV. We'll speak it, then.
BEL. Great griefs, I see, med'cine the less, for Cloten
Is quite forgot. He was a queen's son, boys;
And, though he came our enemy, remem-ber
He was paid for that; though mean and mighty, rotting [461
Together, have one dust, yet reverence—
That angel of the world—doth make dis-tinction
Of place 'tween high and low. Our foe was princely;
And, though you took his life, as being our foe,
Yet bury him as a prince.
GUI. Pray you, fetch him hither. [470
Thersites' body is as good as Ajax'

[6] B, thee, which probably Shakespeare wrote.

[7] wonder.

When neither are alive.

ARV. If you'll go fetch him,
We'll say our song the whilst.—Brother, begin.— [*Exit* BELARIUS.

GUI. Nay, Cadwal, we must lay his head to th' east;
My father hath a reason for't.

ARV. 'Tis true.

GUI. Come on then, and remove him.

ARV. So, begin. [481

GUI.

Fear no more the heat o' th' sun,
Nor the furious winter's rages;
Thou thy worldly task hast done,
Home art gone, and ta'en thy wages;
Golden lads and girls all must,
As chimney-sweepers, come to dust.

ARV. [489

Fear no more the frown o' th' great,
Thou art past the tyrant's stroke:
Care no more to clothe and eat;
To thee the reed is as the oak:
The sceptre, learning, physic, must
All follow this, and come to dust.

GUI.

Fear no more the lightning-flash,

ARV.

Nor th' all-dreaded thunder-stone;

GUI. [500

Fear not slander, censure rash;

ARV.

Thou hast finished joy and moan:

BOTH.

All lovers young, all lovers must
Consign to thee, and come to dust.

GUI.

No exorciser harm thee!

ARV.

Nor no witchcraft charm thee! [510

GUI.

Ghost unlaid forbear thee!

ARV.

Nothing ill come near thee!

BOTH.

Quiet consummation have;
And renownëd be thy grave!

Re-enter BELARIUS, *with the body of* CLOTEN.

GUI. We have done our obsequies. [520
Come, lay him down.

BEL. Here's a few flowers, but, 'bout midnight, more;
The herbs that have on them cold dew o' the night
Are strewings fitt'st for graves.—Upon their faces.—
You were as flow'rs, now withered; even so
These herblets shall, which we upon you strew. [531
Come on, away; apart upon our knees.
The ground that gave them first has them again;
Their pleasures here are past, so is their pain. [*Exeunt* BELARIUS, GUIDERIUS, *and* ARVIRAGUS.

A considerable time must be supposed to elapse, then IMOGEN *awakes.*

IMO. Yes, sir, to Milford-Haven; [540
which is the way?
I thank you. By yond bush? Pray, how far thither?
'Ods pittikins! can it be six mile yet?
I have gone all night: faith, I'll lie down and sleep.
[*Seeing the body of* CLOTEN.] But, soft! no bedfellow! O gods and goddesses!
These flowers are like the pleasures of the world; [551
This bloody man, the care on't. I hope I dream;
For so I thought I was a cave-keeper,
And cook to honest creatures; but 'tis not so,
'Twas but a bolt of nothing, shot at nothing,
Which the brain makes of fumes. Our very eyes [560
Are sometimes like our judgments, blind. Good faith,
I tremble still with fear; but, if there be

Yet left in heaven as small a drop of pity
As a wren's eye, feared gods, a part of it!
The dream's here still; even when I wake, it is
Without me, as within me; not imagined, felt.
A headless man! The garments of Posthumus!
I know the shape of's leg, this is his hand,
His foot Mercurial, his Martial thigh,
The brawns of Hercules; but his Jovial face—
Murder in heaven? How! 'Tis gone.—Pisanio,
All curses madded Hecuba gave the Greeks,
And mine to boot, be darted on thee! Thou,
Conspired with that irregulous devil, Cloten,
Hast here cut off my lord.—To write and read
Be henceforth treacherous! Damned Pisanio,
Hath with his forgëd letters, damned Pisanio,
From this most bravest vessel of the world
Struck the main-top! O Posthumus! alas!
Where is thy head? where's that? Ay me! where's that?
Pisanio might have killed thee at the heart,
And left thy[8] head on. How should this be? Pisanio?
'Tis he and Cloten; malice and lucre in them
Have laid this woe here. O! 'tis pregnant, pregnant!
The drug he gave me, which he said was precious
And cordiäl to me, have I not found it
Murd'rous to the senses? That confirms it home;
This is Pisanio's deed, and Cloten's:—O!
Give color to my pale cheek with thy blood,
That we the horrider may seem to those
Which chance to find us.—O! my lord, my lord. [*Falls on the body.*

Enter Lucius, *a* Captain, *other Officers, and a* Soothsayer.

Cap. To them the legions garrisoned in Gallia,
After your will, have crossed the sea, attending
You here at Milford-Haven with your ships:
They are here in readiness.
Luc. But what from Rome?
Cap. The senate hath stirred up the cónfiners
And gentlemen of Italy, most willing spirits,
That promise noble service; and they come
Under the conduct of bold Iachimo,
Sienna's brother.
Luc. When expect you them?
Cap. With the next benefit o' th' wind.
Luc. This forwardness
Makes our hopes fair. Command our present numbers
Be mustered; bid the captains look to't. —Now, sir,
What have you dreamed of late of this war's purpose?
Sooth. Last night the very gods showed me a vision—
I fast and prayed for their intelligence—thus:
I saw Jove's bird, the Roman eagle, winged
From the spongy south to this part of the west,
There vanished in the sunbeams; which portends,
Unless my sins abuse my divination,
Success to th' Roman host.
Luc. Dream often so,
And never false.—Soft, ho! what trunk is here
Without his top? The ruin speaks that sometime
It was a worthy building.—How! a page!
Or dead or sleeping on him? But dead rather,

[8] B, this.

For nature doth abhor to make his bed
With the defunct, or sleep upon the dead.
Let's see the boy's face.
CAP. He's alive, my lord.
LUC. He'll, then, instruct us of this body.—Young one,
Inform us of thy fortunes, for it seems
They crave to be demanded. Who is this
Thou mak'st thy bloody pillow? Or who was he
That, otherwise than noble nature did,
Hath altered that good picture? What's thy interest
In this sad wrack? How came't? Who is't?
What are thou?
IMO. I am nothing; or, if not,
Nothing to be were better. This was my master,
A very valiant Briton and a good,
That here by mountaineers lies slain. Alas!
There are no more such masters; I may wander
From east to occident, cry out for service,
Try many, all good, serve truly, never
Find such another master.
LUC. 'Lack, good youth!
Thou mov'st no less with thy complaining than
Thy master in bleeding. Say his name, good friend.
IMO. Richard du Champ. <If I do lie and do
No harm by it, though the gods hear, I hope
They'll pardon it.> Say you, sir?
LUC. Thy name?
IMO. Fidele, sir.
LUC. Thou dost approve thyself the very same;
Thy name well fits thy faith, thy faith thy name.
Wilt take thy chance with me? I will not say
Thou shalt be so well mastered, but be sure
No less beloved. The Roman emperor's letters,
Sent by a consul to me, should not sooner
Than thine own worth prefer thee. Go with me.
IMO. I'll follow, sir; but first, an't please the gods,
I'll hide my master from the flies, as deep
As these poor pickaxes can dig; and, when
With wild wood-leaves and weeds I ha' strewed his grave,
And on it said a century of prayers,
Such as I can, twice o'er, I'll weep and sigh,
And, leaving so his service, follow you,
So please you entertain me.
LUC. Ay, good youth,
And rather father thee than master thee.
My friends,
The boy hath taught us manly duties; let us
Find out the prettiest daisied plot we can,
And make him with our pikes and partisans
A grave; come, arm him. Boy, he is preferred
By thee to us, and he shall be interred
As soldiers can. Be cheerful; wipe thine eyes:
Some falls are means the happier to arise.
[Exeunt.

SCENE III

We are back in the palace again. CYMBELINE'S *Queen is dangerously ill; and he is very anxious about her. He is accompanied by Lords and Attendants, and has* PISANIO *before him.*

CYM. Again; and bring me word how 'tis with her. *[Exit an Attendant.*
A fever, with the absence of her son;
A madness, of which her life's in danger!—Heavens!
How deeply you at once do touch me. Imogen,
The great part of my comfort, gone; my queen
Upon a desperate bed, and in a time
When fearful wars point at me; her son gone,

So needful for this present: it strikes me, past
The hope of comfort.—But for thee, fellow,
Who needs must know of her departure and
Dost seem so ignorant, we'll enforce it from thee
By a sharp torture.
PIS. Sir, my life is yours,
I humbly set it at your will; but, for my mistress,
I nothing know where she remains, why gone,
Nor when she purposes return. Beseech your highness,
Hold me your loyal servant.
1 LORD. Good my liege,
The day that she was missing he was here;
I dare be bound he's true and shall perform
All parts of his subjection loyally. For Cloten,
There wants no diligence in seeking him;
And will, no doubt, be found.
CYM. The time is troublesome.
[*To* PISANIO.] We'll slip you for a season; but our jealousy
Does yet depend.
1 LORD. So please your majesty,
The Roman legions, all from Gallia drawn,
Are landed on your coast, with a supply
Of Roman gentlemen by the senate sent.
CYM. Now for the counsel of my son and queen!
I am amazed with matter.
1 LORD. Good my liege,
Your preparation can affront no less
Than what you hear of; come more, for more you're ready:
The want is, but to put those pow'rs in motion
That long to move.
CYM. I thank you.—Let's withdraw,
And meet the time as it seeks us. We fear not
What can from Italy annoy us, but
We grieve at chances here. Away!

[*Exeunt all but* PISANIO.

PIS. I heard no letter from my master since
I wrote him Imogen was slain; 'tis strange;
Nor hear I from my mistress, who did promise
To yield me often tidings; neither know I
What is betid to Cloten; but remain
Perplexed in all: the heavens still must work.
Wherein I am false I am honest; not true, to be true.
These present wars shall find I love my country,
Even to the note o' th' king, or I'll fall in them.
All other doubts, by time let them be cleared;
Fortune brings in some boats that are not steered.

[*Exit.*

SCENE IV

BELARIUS, GUIDERIUS, *and* ARVIRAGUS *are again in front of their cave.*

GUI. The noise is round about us.
BEL. Let us from it.
ARV. What pleasure, sir, find we in life, to lock it
From action and adventure?
GUI. Nay, what hope
Have we in hiding us? this way, the Romans
Must or for Britons slay us or receive us
For barbarous and unnatural revolts
During their use, and slay us after.
BEL. Sons,
We'll higher to the mountains; there secure us.
To the king's party there's no going; newness
Of Cloten's death—we being not known, not mustered
Among the bands—may drive us to a render
Where we have lived, and so extort from's that
Which we have done, whose answer would be death
Drawn on with torture.

GUI. This is, sir, a doubt
In such a time nothing becoming you,
Nor satisfying us.
ARV. It is not likely
That when they hear the Roman horses neigh,
Behold their quartered fires, have both their eyes
And ears so cloyed importantly as now,
That they will waste their time upon our note,
To know from whence we are.
BEL. O! I am known
Of many in the army; many years,
Though Cloten then but young, you see, not wore him
From my remembrance. And, besides, the king
Hath not deserved my service nor your loves,
Who find in my exile the want of breeding,
The certainty of this hard life; aye hopeless
To have the courtesy your cradle promised,
But to be still hot summer's tanlings and
The shrinking slaves of winter.
GUI. Than be so
Better to cease to be. Pray, sir, to th' army:
I and my brother are not known; yourself,
So out of thought, and thereto so o'ergrown,
Cannot be questioned.
ARV. By this sun that shines,
I'll thither: what thing is it that I never
Did see man die! scarce ever looked on blood
But that of coward hares, hot goats, and venison!
Never bestrid a horse, save one that had
A rider like myself, who ne'er wore rowel
Nor iron on his heel! I am ashamed
To look upon the holy sun, to have
The benefit of his bless'd beams, remaining
So long a poor unknown.
GUI. By heavens! I'll go:
If you will bless me, sir, and give me leave,
I'll take the better care; but, if you will not,
The hazard therefor due fall on me by
The hands of Romans.
ARV. So say I; amen!
BEL. No reason I, since of your lives you set
So slight a valuation, should reserve
My cracked one to more care. Have with you, boys!
If in your country wars you chance to die,
That is my bed too, lads, and there I'll lie:
Lead, lead. <The time seems long; their blood thinks scorn,
Till it fly out and show them princes born.>
[*Exeunt.*

ACT FIVE

SCENE I

POSTHUMUS *has received from* PISANIO *a handkerchief purporting to be dyed in the heart-blood of* IMOGEN, *and he is lamenting over it. The scene is the Roman camp near Milford-Haven.*

POST. Yea, bloody cloth, I'll keep thee, for I wished
Thou shouldst be colored thus.—You married ones,
If each of you should take this course, how many
Must murder wives much better than themselves
For wrying but a little!—O Pisanio!
Every good servant does not all commands;
No bond but to do just ones.—Gods! if you
Should have ta'en vengeance on my faults, I never
Had lived to put on this; so had you saved
The noble Imogen to repent, and struck
Me, wretch, more worth your vengeance. But, alack!
You snatch some hence for little faults; that's love,

To have them fall no more; you some permit [29
To second ills with ills, each elder worse,
And make them dread it, to the doers' thrift.
But Imogen is your own; do your best wills,
And make me bless'd to obey. I am brought hither
Among the Italian gentry, and to fight
Against my lady's kingdom; 'tis enough
That, Britain, I have killed thy mistress. Peace! [1] [40
I'll give no wound to thee.—Therefore, good heavens,
Hear patiently my purpose: I'll disrobe me
Of these Italian weeds, and suit myself
As does a Briton peasant; so I'll fight
Against the part I come with, so I'll die
For thee, O Imogen! even for whom my life [49
Is, every breath, a death: and thus, unknown,
Pitied nor hated, to the face of peril
Myself I'll dedicate. Let me make men know
More valor in me than my habits show.
Gods! put the strength o' th' Leonati in me.
To shame the guise o' th' world, I will begin [59
The fashion, less without and more within. [*Exit.*

Scene II

After marchings by the Roman army, led by Lucius *and* Iachimo, *and the British, followed by* Posthumus, *in the guise of a poor soldier, there are alarums; and then* Iachimo *and* Posthumus *meet on the field of battle.* Iachimo *is vanquished, disarmed, and then left alone.*

Iach. The heaviness and guilt within my bosom
Takes off my manhood: I have belied a lady, [11
The princess of this country, and the air on't
Revengingly enfeebles me; or could this carl,
A very drudge of nature's, have subdued me
In my profession? Knighthoods and honors, borne
As I wear mine, are titles but of scorn.
If that thy gentry, Britain, go before [21
This lout as he exceeds our lords, the odds
Is that we scarce are men and you are gods. [*Exit.*

Scene III

Elsewhere on the field of battle much fighting takes place. Ultimately the Britons fly, and Cymbeline *is made prisoner. To his rescue enter* Belarius, Guiderius, *and* Arviragus.

Bel. Stand, stand! We have th' advantage of the ground.
The lane is guarded; nothing routs us but
The villany of our fears. [10
Gui. and Arv. Stand, stand, and fight!

Several Britons turn to second their efforts and Posthumus *comes in to aid them. They rescue* Cymbeline.

Scene IV

In another part of the field, Lucius, *who is attended by* Imogen *(in boy's clothes) and accompanied by* Iachimo, *is upset by the turn the battle has taken.*

Luc. Away, boy, from the troops, and save thyself;
For friends kill friends, and the disorder's such
As war were hoodwinked. [9
Iach. 'Tis their fresh supplies.
Luc. It is a day turned strangely: or betimes
Let's re-inforce or fly. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V

After the battle, Posthumus *(no longer in the attire of a poor soldier), on the edge of the battlefield, meets a British* Lord, *who has saved himself by flight.*

Lord. Cam'st thou from where they made the stand?

[1] This does not seem correct. "Mistress-piece" has been suggested.

POST. I did:
Though you, it seems, come from the fliers.
LORD. I did. [10
POST. No blame be to you, sir, for all was lost,
But that the heavens fought. The king himself
Of his wings destitute, the army broken,
And but the backs of Britons seen, all flying
Through a strait lane; the enemy full-hearted,
Lolling the tongue with slaught'ring, having work [21
More plentiful than tools to do't, struck down
Some mortally, some slightly touched, some falling
Merely through fear; that the strait pass was dammed
With dead men hurt behind, and cowards living
To die with lengthened shame. [30
LORD. Where was this lane?
POST. Close by the battle, ditched, and walled with turf;
Which gave advantage to an ancient soldier,
An honest one, I warrant; who deserved
So long a breeding as his white beard came to,
In doing this for's country; athwart the lane, [40
He, with two striplings—lads more like to run
The country base than to commit such slaughter—
With faces fit for masks, or rather fairer
Than those for preservation cased, or shame,
Made good the passage; cried to those that fled,
"Our Britain's harts die flying, not our men: [51
To darkness fleet souls that fly backwards. Stand!
Or we are Romans, and will give you that,
Like beasts, which you shun beastly, and may save,
But to look back in frown: stand, stand!" These three,
Three thousand confident, in act as many— [61
For three performers are the file when all
The rest do nothing—with this word, "Stand, stand!"
Accommodated by the place, more charming
With their own nobleness—which could have turned
A distaff to a lance—gilded pale looks, [70
Part shame, part spirit renewed; that some, turned coward
But by example—O! a sin in war,
Damned in the first beginners—gan to look
The way that they did, and to grin like lions
Upon the pikes o' th' hunters. Then began
A stop i' th' chaser, a retire, anon, [80
A rout, confusion thick; forthwith they fly
Chickens, the way which they stooped eagles; slaves,
The strides they victors made. And now our cowards—
Like fragments in hard voyages—became
The life o' th' need; having found the back door open
Of the unguarded hearts, Heavens! how they wound; [91
Some slain before; some dying; some their friends
O'er-borne i' th' former wave; ten, chased by one,
Are now each one the slaughter-man of twenty;
Those that would die or ere resist are grown
The mortal bugs o' th' field. [100
LORD. This was strange chance:
A narrow lane, an old man, and two boys!
POST. Nay, do not wonder at it; you are made
Rather to wonder at the things you hear
Than to work any. Will you rime upon't,
And vent it for a mock'ry? Here is one:

"Two boys, an old man twice a boy, a lane,
Preserved the Britons, was the Romans' bane."

LORD. Nay, be not angry, sir.

POST. 'Lack! to what end?
Who dares not stand his foe, I'll be his friend;
For, if he'll do, as he is made to do,
I know he'll quickly fly my friendship too.
You have put me into rime.

LORD. Farewell; you're angry. [*Exit.*

POST. Still going?—This is a lord! O noble misery!
To be i' th' field, and ask, "what news?" of me!
To-day how many would have given their honors
To have saved their carcases! took heel to do't,
And yet died too! I, in mine own woe charmed,
Could not find death where I did hear him groan,
Nor feel him where he struck: being an ugly monster,
'Tis strange he hides him in fresh cups, soft beds,
Sweet words; or hath moe ministers than we
That draw his knives i' th' war. Well, I will find him;
For, being now a favorer to the Briton,
No more a Briton, I have resumed again
The part I came in; fight I will no more,
But yield me to the veriest hind that shall
Once touch my shoulder. Great the slaughter is
Here made by th' Roman; great the answer be
Britons must take. For me, my ransom's death;
On either side I come to spend my breath,
Which neither here I'll keep nor bear again,
But end it by some means for Imogen.

Enter two British CAPTAINS, *and Soldiers.*

1 CAP. Great Jupiter be praised! Lucius is taken.
'Tis thought the old man and his sons were angels.

2 CAP. There was a fourth man, in a silly habit,
That gave th' affront with them.

1 CAP. So 'tis reported;
But none of 'em can be found.—Stand! who is there?

POST. A Roman,
Who had not now been drooping here, if seconds
Had answered him.

2 CAP. Lay hands on him; a dog!
A leg of Rome shall not return to tell
What crows have pecked them here. He brags his service
As if he were of note: bring him to th' king.

Enter CYMBELINE, *attended;* BELARIUS, GUIDERIUS, ARVIRAGUS, PISANIO, *and Roman Captives. The* CAPTAINS *present* POSTHUMUS *to* CYMBELINE, *who delivers him over to a* GAOLER; *then exeunt omnes.*

SCENE VI

POSTHUMUS *has been committed to a prison. The two* GAOLERS *who have put him there are about to take their leave of him.*

1 GAOL. You shall not now be stol'n; you have locks upon you.
So graze as you find pasture.

2 GAOL. Ay, or a stomach.

[*Exeunt* GAOLERS.

POST. Most welcome, bondage! for thou art a way,
I think, to liberty. Yet am I better
Than one that's sick o' th' gout, since he had rather
Groan so in perpetuity than be cured
By the sure physician, Death, who is the key
T' unbar these locks. My conscience, thou art fettered
More than my shanks and wrists: you good gods, give me

The penitent instrument to pick that bolt;
Then, free for ever! Is't enough I am sorry?
So children temporal fathers do appease;
Gods are more full of mercy. Must I repent?
I cannot do it better than in gyves,
Desired more than constrained; to satisfy,
If of my freedom 'tis the main part, take
No stricter render of me than my all.
I know you are more clement than vild men,
Who of their broken debtors take a third,
A sixth, a tenth, letting them thrive again
On their abatement: that's not my desire;
For Imogen's dear life take mine; and, though
'Tis not so dear, yet 'tis a life; you coined it;
'Tween man and man they weigh not every stamp;
Though light, take pieces for the figure's sake:
You rather mine, being yours; and so, great powers,
If you will take this audit, take this life,
And cancel these cold bonds.—O Imogen!
I'll speak to thee in silence. [*Sleeps.*

Solemn music. Enter as in an apparition Sicilius Leonatus, *father to* Posthumus, *an old man, attired like a warrior; leading in his hand an ancient matron, his wife, and mother to* Posthumus, *with music before them. Then, after other music, follow the two young* Leonati, *brothers to* Posthumus, *with wounds, as they died in the wars. They circle* Posthumus *round, as he lies sleeping.*

Sici.
No more, thou thunder-master, show
Thy spite on mortal flies:
With Mars fall out; with Juno chide,
That thy adulteries
Rates and revenges.
Hath my poor boy done aught but well,
Whose face I never saw?
I died whilst in the womb he stayed
Attending nature's law:
Whose father then—as men report,
Thou orphans' father art—
Thou shouldst have been, and shielded him
From this earth-vexing smart.

Moth.
Lucina lent not me her aid,
But took me in my throes;
That from me was Posthumus ripped,
Came crying 'mongst his foes,
A thing of pity!

Sici.
Great nature, like his ancestry,
Moulded the stuff so fair,
That he deserved the praise o' th' world,
As great Sicilius' heir.

1 Bro.
When once he was mature for man,
In Britain where was he
That could stand up his parallel,
Or fruitful object be
In eye of Imogen, that best
Could deem his dignity?

Moth.
With marriage wherefore was he mocked,
To be exiled, and thrown
From Leonati's seat, and cast
From her his dearest one,
Sweet Imogen?

Sici.
Why did you suffer Iachimo,
Slight thing of Italy,
To taint his nobler heart and brain
With needless jealousy;
And to become the geck and scorn
O' th' other's villany?

2 Bro.
For this from stiller seats we came,
Our parents and us twain,
That striking in our country's cause
Fell bravely and were slain;
Our fealty and Tenantius' right
With honor to maintain.

1 Bro.
Like hardiment Posthumus hath
To Cymbeline performed:
Then Jupiter, thou king of gods,
Why hast thou thus adjourned
The graces for his merits due,
Being all to dolors turned?

Sici.
Thy crystal window ope; look out;
No longer exercise
Upon a valiant race thy harsh
And potent injuries.

Moth.
Since, Jupiter, our son is good,
Take off his miseries.

Sici.
Peep through thy marble mansion; help!
Or we poor ghosts will cry
To th' shining synod of the rest
Against thy deity.

Both Bro.
Help, Jupiter! or we appeal,
And from thy justice fly.

Jupiter *descends in thunder and lightning, sitting upon an eagle; he throws a thunderbolt. The Ghosts fall on their knees.*

Jup.
No more, you petty spirits of region low,
Offend our hearing; hush! How dare you ghosts
Accuse the thunderer, whose bolt, you know,
Sky-planted, batters all rebelling coasts?
Poor shadows of Elysium, hence; and rest
Upon your never-withering banks of flowers:
Be not with mortal accidents oppressed;
No care of yours it is; you know 'tis ours.
Whom best I love I cross; to make my gift,
The more delayed, delighted. Be content;
Your low-laid son our godhead will uplift:
His comforts thrive, his trials well are spent.
Our Jovial star reigned at his birth, and in
Our temple was he married. Rise, and fade!
He shall be lord of Lady Imogen,
And happier much by his affliction made.
[*Handing* Sicilius *a tablet.*] This tablet lay upon his breast, wherein
Our pleasure his full fortune doth confine;
And so, away; no farther with your din
Express impatience, lest you stir up mine.
Mount, eagle, to my palace crystalline.
[*Ascends.*

Sici. He came in thunder; his celestial breath
Was sulphurous to smell; the holy eagle
Stooped, as to foot us; his ascension is
More sweet than our bless'd fields; his royal bird
Prunes the immortal wing and cloys his beak,
As when his god is pleased.

All. Thanks, Jupiter!

Sici. The marble pavement closes; he is entered
His radiant roof. Away! and, to be blest,
Let us with care perform his great behest. [*After he has placed the tablet on* Posthumus' *breast, the* Ghosts *vanish.*

Post., *waking.* Sleep, thou hast been a grandsire, and begot
A father to me; and thou hast created
A mother and two brothers. But—O scorn!—
Gone! they went hence so soon as they were born;
And so I am awake.—Poor wretches, that depend
On greatness' favor dream as I have done,
Wake, and find nothing. But, alas! I swerve:
Many dream not to find, neither deserve,
And yet are steeped in favors; so am I,

That have this golden chance and know not why.
What fairies haunt this ground? A book? O rare one!
Be not, as is our fangled world, a garment
Nobler than that it covers: let thy effects
So follow, to be most unlike our courtiers,
As good as promise.
[*Opens the book at random, and reads:*
"Whenas a lion's whelp shall, to himself unknown, without seeking, find and be embraced by a piece of tender air; and when from a stately cedar shall be lopped branches, which, being dead many years, shall after revive, be jointed to the old stock, and freshly grow, then shall Posthumus end his miseries, Britain be fortunate and flourish in peace and plenty."
'Tis still a dream, or else such stuff as madmen
Tongue and brain not; either both or nothing;
Or senseless speaking or a speaking such
As sense cannot untie. Be what it is,
The action of my life is like it, which
I'll keep, if but for sympathy.

Re-enter GAOLERS.

1 GAOL. Come, sir, are you ready for death?

POST. Over-roasted rather; ready long ago.

1 GAOL. Hanging is the word, sir; if you be ready for that, you are well cooked.

POST. So, if I prove a good repast to the spectators, the dish pays the shot.

1 GAOL. A heavy reckoning for you, sir; but the comfort is, you shall be called to no more payments, fear no more tavern-bills, which are often the sadness of parting, as the procuring of mirth. You come in faint for want of meat, depart reeling with too much drink, sorry that you have paid too much; and sorry that you are paid too much; purse and brain both empty; the brain the heavier for being too light, the purse too light, being drawn of heaviness: of this contradiction you shall now be quit. O! the charity of a penny cord; it sums up thousands in a trice; you have no true debitor and creditor but it; of what's past, is, and to come, the discharge. Your neck, sir, is pen, book and counters; so the acquittance follows.

POST. I am merrier to die than thou art to live.

1 GAOL. Indeed, sir, he that sleeps feels not the toothache; but a man that were to sleep your sleep, and a hangman to help him to bed, I think he would change places with his officer; for look you, sir, you know not which way you shall go.

POST. Yes, indeed do I, fellow.

1 GAOL. Your Death has eyes in's head, then; I have not seen him so pictured: you must either be directed by some that take upon them to know, or take upon yourself that which I am sure you do not know, or jump the after inquiry on your own peril; and how you shall speed in your journey's end, I think you'll never return to tell one.

POST. I tell thee, fellow, there are none want eyes to direct them the way I am going but such as wink and will not use them.

1 GAOL. What an infinite mock is this, that a man should have the best use of eyes to see the way of blindness! I am sure hanging's the way of winking.

Enter a MESSENGER.

MESS. Knock off his manacles; bring your prisoner to the king.

POST. Thou bring'st good news; I am called to be made free.

1 GAOL. I'll be hanged, then.

POST. Thou shalt be then freer than a gaoler; no bolts for the dead. [*Exeunt all but* FIRST GAOLER.

1 GAOL. Unless a man would marry a gallows and beget young gibbets, I never saw one so prone. Yet, on my conscience, there are verier knaves desire to live, for all he be a Roman; and there be some of them too, that die against their wills; so should I, if I were one. I would we were all of one mind, and one mind

good; O! there were desolation of gaolers and gallowses. I speak against my present profit, but my wish hath a preferment in't. [*Exit.*

Scene VII

CYMBELINE *is in his tent with* BELARIUS, GUIDERIUS, ARVIRAGUS, PISANIO, *Lords, Officers, and Attendants. He is full of gratitude to his three saviors, but is concerned over the disappearance of the poor soldier who has also done good service.*

CYM. Stand by my side, you whom the gods have made
Preservers of my throne. Woe is my heart
That the poor soldier that so richly fought,
Whose rags shamed gilded arms, whose naked breast
Stepped before targes of proof, cannot be found:
He shall be happy that can find him, if
Our grace can make him so.
BEL. I never saw
Such noble fury is so poor a thing;
Such precious deeds in one that promised nought
But beggary and poor looks.
CYM. No tidings of him?
PIS. He hath been searched among the dead and living,
But no trace of him.
CYM. To my grief, I am
The heir of his reward; which I will add
[*To* BELARIUS, GUIDERIUS, *and* ARVIRAGUS] To you, the liver, heart, and brain of Britain,
By whom, I grant, she lives. 'Tis now the time
To ask of whence you are: report it.
BEL. Sir,
In Cambria are we born, and gentlemen:
Further to boast were neither true nor modest,
Unless I add, we are honest.
CYM. Bow your knees. [*They kneel.*
Arise, my knights o' th' battle: I create you
Companions to our person, and will fit you
With dignities becoming your estates.—

Enter CORNELIUS *and Ladies.*

There's business in these faces. Why so sadly
Greet you our victory? you look like Romans,
And not o' th' court of Britain.
COR. Hail, great king!
To sour your happiness, I must report
The queen is dead.
CYM. Whom worse than a physician
Would this report become? But I consider,
By med'cine life may be prolonged, yet death
Will seize the doctor too.—How ended she?
COR. With horror, madly dying, like her life,
Which, being cruel to the world, concluded
Most cruel to herself. What she confessed
I will report, so please you: these her women
Can trip me if I err; who with wet cheeks
Were present when she finished.
CYM. Prithee, say.
COR. First, she confessed she never loved you, only
Affected greatness got by you, not you;
Married your royalty, was wife to your place;
Abhorred your person.
CYM. She alone knew this;
And, but she spoke it dying, I would not
Believe her lips in opening it. Proceed.
COR. Your daughter, whom she bore in hand to love
With such integrity, she did confess
Was as a scorpion to her sight; whose life,
But that her flight prevented it, she had
Ta'en off by poison.
CYM. O most delicate fiend!

Who is't can read a woman?—Is there more?
COR. More, sir, and worse. She did confess she had
For you a mortal mineral, which, being took,
Should by the minute feed on life, and, ling'ring,
By inches waste you; in which time she purposed,
By watching, weeping, tendance, kissing, to
O'ercome you with her show; yea, and in time—
When she had fitted you with her craft—to work
Her son into th' adoption of the crown,
But, failing of her end by his strange absence,
Grew shameless-desperate; opened, in despite
Of heaven and men, her purposes; repented
The evils she hatched were not effected; so,
Despairing, died.
CYM. Heard you all this, her women?
1 LADY. We did, so please your highness.
CYM. Mine eyes
Were not in fault, for she was beautiful;
Mine ears, that heard her flattery; nor my heart,
That thought her like her seeming; it had been vicious
To have mistrusted her: yet, O my daughter!
That it was folly in me, thou mayst say,
And prove it in thy feeling. Heaven mend all!

Enter LUCIUS, IACHIMO, *the* SOOTHSAYER, *and other Roman Prisoners, guarded;* POSTHUMUS *behind, and* IMOGEN, *as* FIDELE.

Thou com'st not, Caius, now for tribute; that
The Britons have razed out, though with the loss
Of many a bold one, whose kinsmen have made suit
That their good souls may be appeased with slaughter
Of you their captives, which ourself have granted:
So think of your estate.
LUC. Consider, sir, the chance of war: the day
Was yours by accident; had it gone with us,
We should not, when the blood was cool, have threatened
Our prisoners with the sword; but, since the gods
Will have it thus, that nothing but our lives
May be called ransom, let it come; sufficeth,
A Roman with a Roman's heart can suffer;
Augustus lives to think on't; and so much
For my peculiar care. This one thing only
I will entreat; my boy, a Briton born,
Let him be ransomed; never master had
A page so kind, so duteous, diligent,
So tender over his occasions, true,
So feat, so nurse-like. Let his virtue join
With my request, which I'll make bold your highness
Cannot deny; he hath done no Briton harm,
Though he have served a Roman. Save him, sir,
And spare no blood beside.
CYM. I have surely seen him;
His favor is familiar to me.—Boy,
Thou hast looked thyself into my grace,
And art mine own. I know not why nor wherefore,
To say, "live, boy:" ne'er thank thy master; live;
And ask of Cymbeline what boon thou wilt,
Fitting my bounty and thy state, I'll give it;
Yea, though thou do demand a prisoner,
The noblest ta'en.
IMO. I humbly thank your highness.

LUC. I do not bid thee beg my life, good lad;
And yet I know thou wilt.
IMO. No, no; alack!
There's other work in hand. I see a thing
Bitter to me as death; your life, good master,
Must shuffle for itself.
LUC. <The boy disdains me,
He leaves me, scorns me; briefly die their joys
That place them on the truth of girls and boys.
Why stands he so perplexed?>
CYM. What wouldst thou, boy?
I love thee more and more; think more and more
What's best to ask. Know'st him thou look'st on? speak;
Wilt have him live? Is he thy kin? thy friend?
IMO. He is a Roman; no more kin to me
Than I to your highness; who, being born your vassal,
Am something nearer.
CYM. Wherefore ey'st him so?
IMO. I'll tell you, sir, in private, if you please
To give me hearing.
CYM. Ay, with all my heart,
And lend my best attention. <What's thy name?
IMO. Fidele, sir.
CYM. Thou'rt my good youth, my page;
I'll be thy master: walk with me; speak freely.> [CYMBELINE *and* IMOGEN *converse apart.*
BEL. <Is not this boy revived from death?
ARV. One sand another
Not more resembles;—that sweet rosy lad
Who died, and was Fidele. What think you?
GUI. The same dead thing alive.
BEL. Peace, peace! see further; he eyes us not; forbear;
Creatures may be alike; were't he, I am sure
He would have spoke to us.
GUI. But we saw him dead.
BEL. Be silent; let's see further.>
PIS. <It is my mistress:
Since she is living, let the time run on
To good, or bad.> [CYMBELINE *and* IMOGEN *come forward.*
CYM. Come, stand thou by our side:
Make thy demand aloud.—[*To* IACHIMO.] Sir, step you forth;
Give answer to this boy, and do it freely,
Or, by our greatness and the grace of it,
Which is our honor, bitter torture shall
Winnow the truth from falsehood.—On, speak to him.
IMO. My boon is, that this gentleman may render
Of whom he had this ring.
POST. <What's that to him?>
CYM. That diamond upon your finger, say,
How came it yours?
IACH. Thou'lt torture me to leave unspoken that
Which, to be spoke, would torture thee.
CYM. How! me?
IACH. I am glad to be constrained to utter that
Which torments me to conceal. By villany
I got this ring; 'twas Leonatus' jewel,
Whom thou didst banish, and—which more may grieve thee,
As it doth me—a nobler sir ne'er lived
'Twixt sky and ground. Wilt thou hear more, my lord?
CYM. All that belongs to this.
IACH. That paragon, thy daughter,
For whom my heart drops blood, and my false spirits
Quail to remember— Give me leave; I faint.
CYM. My daughter! what of her? Renew thy strength;
I had rather thou shouldst live while nature will
Than die ere I hear more. Strive, man, and speak.

IACH. Upon a time—unhappy was the clock
That struck the hour!—it was in Rome —accursed
The mansion where!—'twas at a feast —O, would
Our viands had been poisoned, or at least
Those which I heaved to head!—the good Posthumus—
What should I say? he was too good to be
Where ill men were; and was the best of all
Amongst the rar'st of good ones—sitting sadly,
Hearing us praise our loves of Italy
For beauty that made barren the swelled boast
Of him that best could speak; for feature laming
The shrine of Venus, or straight-pight Minerva,
Postures beyond brief nature; for condition,
A shop of all the qualities that man
Loves woman for; besides that hook of wiving,
Fairness which strikes the eye—
CYM. I stand on fire:
Come to the matter.
IACH. All too soon I shall,
Unless thou wouldst grieve quickly. This Posthumus—
Most like a noble lord in love, and one
That had a royal lover—took his hint;
And, not dispraising whom we praised—therein
He was as calm as virtue—he began
His mistress' picture; which by his tongue being made
And then a mind put in't, either our brags
Were cracked of kitchen trulls, or his description
Proved us unspeaking sots
CYM. Nay, nay, to th' purpose.
IACH. Your daughter's chastity: there it begins.
He spake of her as Dian had hot dreams,
And she alone were cold; whereat I, wretch,
Made scruple of his praise, and wagered with him
Pieces of gold 'gainst this, which then he wore
Upon his honored finger, to attain
In suit the place of his bed, and win this ring
By hers and mine adultery. He, true knight,
No lesser of her honor confident
Than I did truly find her, stakes this ring;
And would so, had it been a carbuncle
Of Phœbus' wheel; and might so safely, had it
Been all the worth of's car. Away to Britain
Post I in this design. Well may you, sir,
Remember me at court, where I was taught
Of your chaste daughter the wide difference
'Twixt amorous and villanous. Being thus quenched
Of hope, not longing, mine Italian brain
Gan in your duller Britain operate
Most vildly; for my vantage, excellent;
And, to be brief, my practice so prevailed,
That I returned with simular proof enough
To make the noble Leonatus mad,
By wounding his belief in her renown
With tokens thus, and thus; averring notes
Of chamber-hanging, pictures, this her bracelet—
Oh, cunning! how I got it!—nay, some marks
Of secret on her person, that he could not
But think her bond of chastity quite cracked,
I having ta'en the forfeit. Whereupon—
Methinks I see him now—
POST., *coming forward*. Ay, so thou dost,
Italian fiend!—Ay me, most credulous fool,
Egregious murderer, thief, anything

That's due to all the villains past, in being,
To come. O! give me cord, or knife, or poison, [400
Some upright justicer.—Thou king, send out
For torturers ingenious; it is I
That all th' abhorrëd things o' th' earth amend
By being worse than they. I am Posthumus,
That killed thy daughter—villain-like, I lie— [409
That caused a lesser villain than myself,
A sacrilegious thief, to do't. The temple
Of virtue was she; yea, and she herself.
Spit, and throw stones, cast mire upon me, set
The dogs o' th' street to bay me; every villain
Be called Posthumus Leonatus; and
Be villany less than 'twas!—O Imogen!
My queen, my life, my wife! O Imogen,
Imogen, Imogen! [420
IMO. Peace, my lord! hear, hear!
POST. Shall's have a play of this? Thou scornful page,
There lie thy part. [*Strikes her: she falls.*
PIS. O, gentlemen, help!—
Mine and your mistress! O! my Lord Posthumus,
You ne'er killed Imogen till now.—Help, help!—
Mine honored lady! [430
CYM. Does the world go round?
POST. How comes these staggers on me?
PIS. Wake, my mistress!
CYM. If this be so, the gods do mean to strike me
To death with mortal joy. [*She revives.*
PIS. How fares my mistress?
IMO. O! get thee from my sight:
[*Rises.* [440
Thou gav'st me poison: dangerous fellow, hence!
Breathe not where princes are.
CYM. The tune[2] of Imogen!
PIS. Lady,
The gods throw stones of sulphur on me, if

[2] voice.

That box I gave you was not thought by me [449
A precious thing: I had it from the queen.
CYM. New matter still!
IMO. It poisoned me.
COR. O gods!
I left out one thing which the queen confessed,
Which must approve thee honest: "If Pisanio
Have," said she, "given his mistress that confection [460
Which I gave him for cordial, she is served
As I would serve a rat."
CYM. What's this, Cornelius?
COR. The queen, sir, very oft impórtuned me
To temper poisons for her, still pretending
The satisfaction of her knowledge only
In killing creatures vild, as cats and dogs,
Of no esteem; I, dreading that her purpose [472
Was of more danger, did compound for her
A certain stuff, which, being ta'en, would cease
The present power of life, but in short time
All offices of nature should again
Do their due functions.—Have you ta'en of it? [481
IMO. Most like I did, for I was dead.
BEL. <My boys,
There was our error.
GUI. This is, sure, Fidele.>
IMO. Why did you throw your wedded lady from you?
[*Embracing* POSTHUMUS.] Think that you are upon a rock; and now
Throw me again. [490
POST. Hang there like fruit, my soul,
Till the tree die!
CYM. How now, my flesh, my child!
What, mak'st thou me a dullard in this act?
Wilt thou not speak to me?
IMO., *kneeling.* Your blessing, sir.

BEL., *to* GUIDERIUS AND ARVIRAGUS.
<Though you did love this youth,
I blame ye not;
You had a motive for't.>
CYM. My tears that fall
Prove holy water on thee! Imogen,
Thy mother's dead.
IMO. I am sorry for't, my lord.
CYM. O, she was naught; and long of her it was
That we meet here so strangely; but her son
Is gone, we know not how, nor where.
PIS. My lord,
Now fear is from me, I'll speak troth: Lord Cloten,
Upon my lady's missing, came to me
With his sword drawn, foamed at the mouth, and swore,
If I discovered not which way she was gone,
It was my instant death. By accident,
I had a feignëd letter of my master's
Then in my pocket, which directed him
To seek her on the mountains near to Milford;
Where, in a frenzy, in my master's garments,
Which he enforced from me, away he posts
With unchaste purpose and with oath to violate
My lady's honor; what became of him
I further know not.
GUI. Let me end the story:
I slew him there.
CYM. Marry, the gods forfend!
I would not thy good deeds should from my lips
Pluck a hard sentence: prithee, valiant youth,
Deny't again.
GUI. I have spoke it, and I did it.
CYM. He was a prince.
GUI. A most incivil one. The wrongs he did me
Were nothing prince-like; for he did provoke me
With language that would make me spurn the sea,
If it could so roar to me. I cut off's head;
And am right glad he is not standing here
To tell this tale of mine.
CYM. I am sorry for thee:
By thine own tongue thou art condemned, and must
Endure our law: thou'rt dead.
IMO. That headless man
I thought had been my lord.
CYM. Bind the offender,
And take him from our presence.
BEL. Stay, sir king:
This man is better than the man he slew,
As well descended as thyself; and hath
More of thee merited than a band of Clotens
Had ever scar for. [*To the Guard.*] Let his arms alone;
They were not born for bondage.
CYM. Why, old soldier,
Wilt thou undo the worth thou art unpaid for,
By tasting of our wrath? How of descent
As good as we?
ARV. In that he spake too far.
CYM., *to* BELARIUS. And thou shalt die for't.
BEL. We will die all three;
But I will prove that two on's are as good
As I have given out him.—My sons, I must,
For mine own part, unfold a dangerous speech,
Though, haply, well for you.
ARV. Your danger's ours.
GUI. And our good his.
BEL. Have at it, then, by leave.—
Thou hadst, great king, a subject who was called
Belarius.
CYM. What of him? he is
A banished traitor.
BEL. He it is that hath
Assumed this age: indeed, a banished man;
I know not how a traitor.
CYM. Take him hence:
The whole world shall not save him.

BEL. Not too hot: [600
First pay me for the nursing of thy sons;
And let it be confiscate all so soon
As I have received it.
CYM. Nursing of my sons!
BEL. I am too blunt and saucy; here's my knee:
Ere I arise, I will prefer my sons;
Then spare not the old father. Mighty sir, [609
These two young gentlemen, that call me father,
And think they are my sons, are none of mine;
They are the issue of your loins, my liege,
And blood of your begetting.
CYM. How! my issue!
BEL. So sure as you your father's. I, old Morgan, [619
Am that Belarius whom you sometime banished:
Your pleasure was my mere offence, my punishment
Itself, and all my treason; that I suffered
Was all the harm I did. These gentle princes—
For such and so they are—these twenty years [629
Have I trained up; those arts they have as I
Could put into them; my breeding was, sir, as
Your highness knows. Their nurse, Euriphile,
Whom for the theft I wedded, stole these children
Upon my banishment: I moved her to't,
Having received the punishment before,
For that which I did then; beaten [640 for loyalty
Excited me to treason. Their dear loss,
The more of you 'twas felt, the more it shaped
Unto my end of stealing them. But, gracious sir,
Here are your sons again; and I must lose
Two of the sweet'st companions in the world. [*Weeps.* [650
The benediction of these covering heavens
Fall on their heads like dew! for they are worthy
To inlay heaven with stars.
CYM. Thou weep'st, and speak'st.
The service that you three have done is more
Unlike than this thou tell'st. I lost my children: [660
If these be they, I know not how to wish
A pair of worthier sons.
BEL. Be pleased awhile.
This gentleman, whom I call Polydore,
Most worthy prince, as yours, is true Guiderius;
This gentleman, my Cadwal, Arviragus,
Your younger princely son; he, sir, was lapped
In a most curious mantle, wrought by the hand [671
Of his queen mother, which, for more probation,
I can with ease produce.
CYM. Guiderius had
Upon his neck a mole, a sanguine star;
It was a mark of wonder.
BEL. This is he,
Who hath upon him still that natural stamp. [680
It was wise nature's end in the donation,
To be his evidence now.
CYM. O! what, am I
A mother to the birth of three? Ne'er mother
Rejoiced deliverance more. Blest pray you be,
That, after this strange starting from your orbs,[3]
You may reign in them now.—O Imogen!
Thou hast lost by this a kingdom. [691
IMO. No, my lord;
I have got two worlds by't.—O my gentle brothers!
Have we thus met? O, never say hereafter
But I am truest speaker: you called me brother,
When I was but your sister; I, you brothers, [700
When ye were so indeed.

[3] orbits.

CYM. Did you e'er meet?
ARV. Ay, my good lord.
GUI. And at first meeting loved;
Continued so, until we thought he died.
COR. By the queen's dram she swallowed.
CYM. O rare instinct!
When shall I hear all through? This fierce abridgment [710
Hath to it circumstantial branches, which
Distinction should be rich in. Where? how lived you?
And when came you to serve our Roman captive?
How parted with your brothers? how first met them?
Why fled you from the court, and whither? These,
And your three motives to the battle, with [721
I know not how much more, should be demanded,
And all the other by-dependencies,
From chance to chance; but nor the time nor place
Will serve our long interrogatories. See:
Posthumus anchors upon Imogen;
And she, like harmless lightning, throws her eye [730
On him, her brothers, me, her master, hitting
Each object with a joy: the counterchange
Is severally in all. Let's quit this ground,
And smoke the temple with our sacrifices.
[*To* BELARIUS.] Thou art my brother; so we'll hold thee ever.
IMO., *to* BELARIUS. You are my father too; and did relieve me, [741
To see this gracious season.
CYM. All o'erjoyed
Save these in bonds; let them be joyful too,
For they shall taste our comfort.
IMO., *to* LUCIUS. My good master,
I will yet do you service.
LUC. Happy be you!
CYM. The forlorn soldier that so nobly fought, [751
He would have well becomed this place and graced
The thankings of a king.
POST. I am, sir,
The soldier that did company these three
In poor beseeming; 'twas a fitment for
The purpose I then followed.—That I was he,
Speak, Iachimo; I had you down and might [761
Have made you finish.
IACH., *kneeling*. I am down again;
But now my heavy conscience sinks my knee,
As then your force did. Take that life, beseech you,
Which I so often owe; but your ring first
And here the bracelet of the truest princess [770
That ever swore her faith.
POST. Kneel not to me:
The pow'r that I have on you is to spare you;
The malice towards you, to forgive you. Live,
And deal with others better.
CYM. Nobly doomed:
We'll learn our freeness of a son-in-law;
Pardon's the word to all. [780
ARV. You holp us, sir,
As you did mean indeed to be our brother;
Joyed are we that you are.
POST. Your servant, princes. Good my lord of Rome,
Call forth your soothsayer. As I slept, methought
Great Jupiter, upon his eagle backed,
Appeared to me, with other spritely shows [791
Of mine own kindred: when I waked, I found
This label on my bosom; whose containing
Is so from sense in hardness that I can
Make no collection[4] of it; let him show
His skill in the construction.
LUC. Philarmonus!
SOOTH., *stepping forward*. Here, my good lord. [801
LUC. Read, and declare the meaning.

[4] reasonable interpretation.

SOOTH. "Whenas a lion's whelp shall, to himself unknown, without seeking, find and be embraced by a piece of tender air; and when from a stately cedar shall be lopped branches, which, being dead many years, shall after revive, be jointed to the old stock, and freshly grow: then shall Posthumus end his [810 miseries, Britain be fortunate and flourish in peace and plenty."

Thou, Leonatus, art the lion's whelp;
The fit and apt construction of thy name,
Being Leo-natus, doth import so much.
[*To* CYMBELINE.] The piece of tender air, thy virtuous daughter,
Which we call *mollis aer;* and *mollis aer*
We term it *mulier,* which *mulier,* I divine,
Is this most constant wife, who, even now, [821
Answering the letter of the oracle,
[*To* POSTHUMUS] Unknown to you, unsought, were clipped about
With this most tender air.

CYM. This hath some seeming.

SOOTH. The lofty cedar, royal Cymbeline,
Personates thee, and thy lopped branches point [830
Thy two sons forth; who, by Belarius stolen,
For many years thought dead, are now revived,
To the majestic cedar joined, whose issue
Promises Britain peace and plenty.

CYM. Well;
My peace we will begin.—And, Caius Lucius, [840
Although the victor, we submit to Cæsar,
And to the Roman empire, promising
To pay our wonted tribute, from the which
We were dissuaded by our wicked queen;
Whom heavens—in justice both on her and hers—
Have laid most heavy hand.

SOOTH. The fingers of the pow'rs above do tune [850
The harmony of this peace. The visiön
Which I made known to Lucius ere the stroke
Of this yet scarce-cold battle, at this instant
Is full accomplished; for the Roman eagle,
From south to west on wing soaring aloft,
Lessened herself, and in the beams o' th' sun [861
So vanished: which foreshowed our princely eagle,
Th' imperial Cæsar, should again unite
His favor with the radiant Cymbeline,
Which shines here in the west.

CYM. Laud we the gods;
And let our crooked smokes climb to their nostrils
From our bless'd altars. Publish we this peace [871
To all our subjects. Set we forward: let
A Roman and a British ensign wave
Friendly together; so through Lud's town march;
And in the temple of great Jupiter
Our peace we'll ratify; seal it with feasts.
Set on there.—Never was a war did cease,
Ere bloody hands were washed, with [880 such a peace. [*Exeunt.*

THE WHITE DEVIL

BY

JOHN WEBSTER

INTRODUCTION

The story of "Vittoria Corombona; or, The White Devil" is based on fact; but Webster has not scrupled to deal freely with history. The original quarto, bearing date 1612, calls itself "The White Devil, or the Tragedy of Paulo Giordano Ursini, Duke of Brachiano, with the Life and Death of Vittoria Corombona, the famous Venetian courtezan." The date of the play's production cannot be stated with any certainty; but it was later than the beginning of February, 1608–9, since Jonson's "Masque of Queens," then produced, is drawn on. Webster tells us that it was acted in the winter. As it contains two references to Rich's New Description of Ireland, licensed for printing in April, 1610, the winter should be either that of 1610–1 or that of 1611–2, and perhaps we may guess—it is only a guess—1611–2.

"The White Devil" is overshadowed by the same author's "Duchess of Malfi"; but it is, for all that, a tragedy of the finest quality. The same characteristics are observable in the one play as in the other—the somewhat sinister imagination, the morbid character of the similes and metaphors, the fondness for equivocation, the love of parable and narrative (beginning usually with some such phrase as "I have seen" or "I'll tell you"), the author's delight in the describing of his characters (some of whom he is quite capable of introducing only for the sake of describing), and the almost unsurpassable keenness of his repartee. The terseness and vividness of I 1, of the quarrel scene in II 1, of the scene between Brachiano and Vittoria in IV 1, and of the examination scene (III 1), are beyond praise; and the aphoristic excellence of the play is what we should expect from Webster. Both in literary and in dramatic qualities it must take high rank; and, when literary qualities are under consideration, the wonderful dirge that is one of the greatest glories of the play must not be overlooked. Structurally, not much fault is to be found with it, save in regard to Lodovico (the reason for beginning the play with his banishment never being made clear), and the gross unreality of the revelations by Zanche in V. Psychologically, the work is fine: Monticelso, the arrogant, domineering churchman, who, though utterly lacking in charity, is at least not bloody-minded; the deeply hypocritical, subtle, cunning Francisco; Brachiano,[1]

[1] Really, of course, Bracciano; but so spelled by Webster, to secure something like the correct pronunciation; as Shakespeare did with Petruccio, often with lamentable results in some of our colleges.

equally treacherous, but less clever; the noble Cornelia; the courageous Vittoria, who, for all her wickedness, must at least be credited with fidelity to Brachiano; and the always moralizing, yet always despicable, Flamineo: this is a collection of remarkably realized if, with one exception, very unlovely individuals. There is, however, no one who stands out with the force and clearness of the finest characters in "The Duchess of Malfi."

There are some signs of shortening or revision to which attention may be directed. Jaques is mute on his only appearance (in II 1); so is Farnese (in V 1); Pedro is mute in two scenes; Antonelli, in one; and Christophero and Guidantonio appear only in a dumb show. (The Julio who appears there is the Doctor of a previous scene.) It is not improbable that the dumb show may have taken the place of a scene cut out. The length of the final act is also worthy of note: it is more than a third of the whole. That the Page in V 2 shows knowledge of what we have no reason to expect him to know is probably due to an oversight on the part of the author. All this may imply that the production of 1611–2 or thereabouts was not, after all, the original production.

The prime attraction of the play will probably be found to consist in the wonderful duel between Vittoria and the Cardinal. That is indeed a scene managed with extraordinary cleverness, and displaying the genius of Webster almost at its best. There is probably no better examination scene in the language. The situation gives the author full play for his wonderful powers of cut and thrust; and he takes the fullest advantage of his opportunity.

CHARACTERS

MONTICELSO, *a Cardinal.*
FRANCISCO DE MEDICIS, *Duke of Florence.*
BRACHIANO, PAULO GIORDANO URSINI.
GIOVANNI, *his Son.*
COUNT LODOVICO.
CAMILLO.
FLAMINEO, *Brother of Vittoria, Secretary to Brachiano.*
MARCELLO, *Brother of Vittoria, Attendant on Francisco.*
ARRAGON, *Cardinal.*
HORTENSIO, *an Officer of Brachiano.*
ANTONELLI, GASPARO, CARLO, PEDRO — *Friends of Count Lodovico.*
A YOUNG LORD.
DOCTOR JULIO.
A CONJURER.
A LAWYER.
ISABELLA, *Sister of Francisco de Medicis, Wife of Brachiano.*
VITTORIA COROMBONA, *wife to Camillo.*
CORNELIA, *Mother of Vittoria, Flamineo, and Marcello.*
ZANCHE, *a Moor, Waiting-woman to Vittoria.*
MATRON OF THE HOUSE OF CONVERTITES.
Ambassadors, Physicians, Officers, Attendants, &c.

MUTE CHARACTERS.

JAQUES, *a Moorish boy, Servant to Giovanni.*
FARNESE.
GUIDANTONIO, CHRISTOPHERO — *in a dumb show only.*

PLACE: *Rome and Padua.*
TIME: *Towards the close of the* 16*th century.*

ACT ONE

SCENE I

LODOVICO *has been met in a street of Rome by his friends* ANTONELLI *and* GASPARO, *and told of the decree of banishment passed against him.*

LOD. Banished?
ANT. It grieved me much to hear the sentence.
LOD. Ha, ha! O Democritus, thy gods
That govern the whole world—courtly reward
And punishment! Fortune's a right whore:
If she give aught, she deals it in small parcels,
That she may take away all at one swoop.
This 'tis to have great enemies: God quit[1] them!
Your wolf no longer seems to be a wolf
Than when she's hungry.
GAS. You term those enemies
Are men of princely rank.
LOD. O, I pray for them.
The violent thunder is adored by those
Are pashed in pieces by it.
ANT. Come, my lord,
You are justly doomed: look but a little back
Into your former life; you have in three years
Ruined the noblest earldom.
GAS. Your followers
Have swallowed you like mummia, and, being sick
With such unnatural and horrid physic,
Vomit you up i' the kennel.[2]
ANT. All the damnable degrees
Of drinkings have you staggered through: one citizen
Is lord of two fair manors called you master,
Only for caviare.
GAS. Those noblemen
Which were invited to your prodigal feasts
(Wherein the phoenix scarce could scape your throats)
Laugh at your misery, as fore-deeming you
An idle meteor, which, drawn forth the earth,
Would be soon lost i' the air.
ANT. Jest upon you,
And say you were begotten in an earthquake,
You have ruined such fair lordships.
LOD. Very good:
This well goes with two buckets: I must tend
The pouring out of either.
GAS. Worse than these;
You have acted certain murders here in Rome,
Bloody and full of horror.
LOD. 'Las! they were flea-bitings.
Why took they not my head then?
GAS. Oh, my lord,
The law doth sometimes mediate, thinks it good
Not ever to steep violent sins in blood:
This gentle penance may both end your crimes,
And in the example better these bad times.
LOD. So; but I wonder then some great men scape
This banishment: there's Paulo Giordano Ursini,
The Duke of Brachiano, now lives in Rome,
And by close panderism seeks to prostitute

[1] requite.
[2] gutter.

The honor of Vittoria Corombona—
Vittoria, she that might have got my pardon
For one kiss to the duke.
ANT. Have a full man within you.
We see that trees bear no such pleasant fruit
There where they grew first as where they are new set:
Perfumes, the more they are chafed, the more they render
Their pleasing scents; and so afflictiön
Expresseth virtue fully, whether true
Or else adulterate.
LOD. Leave your painted comforts:
I'll make Italian cut-works[3] in their guts,
If ever I return.
GAS. O, sir!
LOD. I am patient.
I have seen some ready to be executed
Give pleasant looks and money, and grown familiar
With the knave hangman: so do I, I thank them,
And would account them nobly merciful,
Would they dispatch me quickly.
ANT. Fare you well:
We shall find time, I doubt not, to repeal
Your banishment.
LOD. I am ever bound to you.
This is the world's alms; pray, make use of it.
Great men sell sheep thus, to be cut in pieces
When first they have shorn them bare and sold their fleeces. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

BRACHIANO *has been paying a visit to* CAMILLO *and* VITTORIA, *and finds himself deeply enamored of the lady. He and the host and hostess are saying farewell, it being already late.* FLAMINEO, *who is ready to do anything for the* DUKE *to help on his own fortunes, is with him; and there are several Attendants in waiting, some of them bearing torches. As they enter the room in which the host and hostess are to leave the* DUKE, *a sennet*[4] *is played.*

BRACH. Your best of rest!
VIT. Unto my lord the duke
The best of welcome!—More lights! attend the duke. [*Exeunt* CAMILLO *and* VITTORIA.
BRACH. Flamineo—
FLAM. My lord?
BRACH. Quite lost, Flamineo! [20
FLAM. Pursue your noble wishes, I am prompt
As lightning to your service. O, my lord,
<The fair Vittoria, my happy sister,
Shall give you present audience.> Gentlemen,
Let the caroche go on; and 'tis his pleasure
You put out all your torches, and depart.
[*Exeunt Attendants.* [30
BRACH. Are we so happy?
FLAM. Can't be otherwise?
Observed you not to-night, my honored lord,
Which way soe'er you went she threw her eyes?
I have dealt already with her chamber-maid,
Zanche the Moor; and she is wondrous proud [40
To be the agent for so high a spirit.
BRACH. We are happy above thought, because 'bove merit.
FLAM. 'Bove merit!—we may now talk freely—'bove merit! What is't you doubt? her coyness? that's but the superficies of lust most women have: yet why should ladies blush to hear that named which they do not fear to handle? Oh, they are politic! they know our desire [50 is increased by the difficulty of enjoying, where a satiety is a blunt, weary, and drowsy passion. If the buttery-hatch at court stood continually open, there would be nothing so passionate crowding, nor hot suit after the beverage.
BRACH. Oh, but her jealous husband!
FLAM. Hang him! a gilder that hath his brains perished with quicksilver is not more cold in the liver: the great bar- [60 riers moulted not more feathers[5] than he hath shed hairs, by the confession of his

[3] open-work embroidery.
[4] A sounding of trumpets, to signalize a ceremonial entry.
[5] not more feathers were torn from helmets in tournaments.

doctor: an Irish gamester that will play himself naked, and then wage all downward at hazard, is not more venturous: so unable to please a woman, that, like a Dutch doublet, all his back is shrunk into his breeches.

Shroud you within this closet, good my lord:

Some trick now must be thought on to divide

My brother-in-law from his fair bedfellow.

BRACH. Oh, should she fail to come!

FLAM. I must not have your lordship thus unwisely amorous. I myself have loved a lady, and pursued her with a great deal of under-age protestation, whom some three or four gallants that have enjoyed would with all their hearts have been glad to have been rid of. 'Tis just like a summer birdcage in a garden; the birds that are without despair to get in, and the birds that are within despair, and are in a consumption, for fear they shall never get out. Away, away, my lord! [*Exit* BRACHIANO.

See, here he comes. This fellow by his apparel

Some men would judge a politician;

But, call his wit in question, you shall find it

Merely an ass in's foot-cloth.

Re-enter CAMILLO.

How now, brother?

What, travelling to bed to your kind wife?

CAM. I assure you, brother, no; my voyage lies

More northerly, in a far colder clime:

I do not well remember, I protest,

When I last lay with her.

FLAM. Strange you should lose your count.

CAM. We never lay together, but ere morning

There grew a flaw[6] between us.

FLAM. 'T had been your part

To have made up that flaw.

CAM. True, but she loathes

I should be seen in't.

FLAM. Why, sir, what's the matter?

CAM. The duke, your master, visits me, I thank him;

And I perceive how, like an earnest bowler,

He very passionately leans that way

He should have his bowl run.

FLAM. I hope you do not think—

CAM. That noblemen bowl booty?[7] faith, his cheek

Hath a most excellent bias; it would fain Jump with my mistress.[8]

FLAM. Will you be an ass,

Despite your Aristotle? or a cuckold,

Contrary to your Ephemerides,

Which shows you under what a smiling planet

You were first swaddled?

CAM. Pew-wer, sir, tell not me

Of planets nor of Ephemerides:

A man may be made cuckold in the daytime,

When the stars' eyes are out.

FLAM. Sir, God b' wi' you;

I do commit you to your pitiful pillow

Stuffed with horn-shavings.

CAM. Brother.—

FLAM. God refuse me!

Might I advise you now, your only course

Were to lock up your wife.

CAM. 'Twere very good.

FLAM. Bar her the sight of revels.

CAM. Excellent.

FLAM. Let her not go to church, but, like a hound,

In lyam[9] at your heels;—

CAM. 'Twere for her honor.

FLAM. And so you should be certain in one fortnight,

Despite her chastity or innocence,

To be cuckolded, which yet is in suspense:

This is my counsel, and I ask no fee for't.

CAM. Come, you know not where my nightcap wrings me.

FLAM. Wear it o' the old fashion; let your large ears come through, it will be more easy. Nay, I will be bitter. Bar your wife of her entertainment? Women are more willing and more gloriously

[6] quarrel.

[7] play badly, to encourage bigger wagering.

[8] the jack at bowls.

[9] leash.

chaste when they are least restrained of their liberty. It seems you would be a fine capricious mathematically jealous coxcomb; take the height of your own horns with a Jacob's staff [10] afore they are up. These politic inclosures for paltry mutton make more rebellion in the flesh than all the provocative electuaries doctors have uttered [11] since last jubilee.

CAM. This doth not physic me. [171

FLAM. It seems you are jealous: I'll show you the error of it by a familiar example. I have seen a pair of spectacles fashioned with such perspective art, that, lay down but one twelve pence o' the board, 'twill appear as if there were twenty; now, should you wear a pair of these spectacles, and see your wife tying her shoe, you would imagine twenty [180 hands were taking up of your wife's clothes, and this would put you into a horrible causeless fury.

CAM. The fault there, sir, is not in the eyesight.

FLAM. True; but they that have the yellow jaundice think all objects they look on to be yellow. Jealousy is worser; her fits present to a man, like so many bubbles in a basin of water, twenty sev- [190 eral crabbed faces; many times makes his own shadow his cuckold-maker. See, she comes.

Re-enter VITTORIA.

<What reason have you to be jealous of [12] this creature? what an ignorant ass or flattering knave might he be counted that should write sonnets to her eyes, or call her brow the snow of Ida or ivory of Corinth, or compare her hair to the [200 blackbird's bill, when 'tis liker the blackbird's feather! This is all; be wise, I will make you friends; and you shall go to bed together. Marry, look you, it shall not be your seeking; do you stand upon that by any means: walk you aloof; I would not have you seen in't.> [CAMILLO *retires*.] Sister <my lord attends you in the banqueting-house [13]>, your husband is wondrous discontented. [210

[10] an instrument for taking altitudes.
[11] offered for sale. [12] concerning.
[13] But we know he is in the adjoining closet.

VIT. I did nothing to displease him: I carved to him at supper-time.

FLAM. <You need not have carved him, in faith; they say he is a capon already. I must now seemingly fall out with you.> Shall a gentleman so well descended as Camillo, <a lousy slave, that within this twenty years rode with the black guard [14] in the duke's carriage, 'mongst spits and dripping-pans>— [220

CAM. <Now he begins to tickle her.>

FLAM. An excellent scholar, <one that hath a head filled with calves' brains without any sage in them,> come crouching in the hams to you for a night's lodging, <that hath an itch in's hams, which like the fire at the glass-house hath not gone out this seven years?> Is he not a courtly gentleman? <When he wears white satin, one would take him [230 by his black muzzle to be no other creature than a maggot.> You are a goodly foil, I confess, well set out, <but covered with a false stone, yon counterfeit diamond.>

CAM. <He will make her know what is in me.>

FLAM. <Come, my lord attends you; thou shalt go to bed to my lord—>

CAM. <Now he comes to't.> [239

FLAM. <With a relish as curious as a vintner going to taste new wine.>

[*To* CAMILLO.] <I am opening your case hard.>

CAM. <A virtuous brother, o' my credit!>

FLAM. He will give thee a ring with a philosopher's stone in it.

CAM. <Indeed, I am studying alchymy.> [249

FLAM. Thou shalt lie in a bed stuffed with turtles' feathers; swoon in perfumed linen, like the fellow was smothered in roses. So perfect shall be thy happiness, that, as men at sea think land and trees and ships go that way they go, so both heaven and earth shall seem to go your voyage. <Shalt meet him; 'tis fixed with nails of diamonds to inevitable necessity.>

VIT. <How shall's rid him hence? [260

[14] the lowest menials.

FLAM. I will put the brees[15] in's tail—set him gadding presently.> <[*To* CAMILLO.] I have almost wrought her to it, I find her coming: but, might I advise you now, for this night I would not lie with her; I would cross her humor, to make her more humble.

CAM. Shall I, shall I?

FLAM. It will show in you a supremacy of judgment.

CAM. True, and a mind differing from the tumultuary opinion; for, *quae negata, grata.*

FLAM. Right: you are the adamant[16] shall draw her to you, though you keep distance off.

CAM. A philosophical reason.

FLAM. Walk by her o' the nobleman's fashion, and tell her you will lie with her at the end of the progress.[17]>

CAM., *coming forward.* Vittoria, I cannot be induced, or, as a man would say, incited—

VIT. To do what, sir?

CAM. To lie with you to-night. Your silkworm useth to fast every third day, and the next following spins the better. To-morrow at night I am for you.

VIT. You'll spin a fair thread, trust to't.

FLAM., *to* CAMILLO. <But, do you hear, I shall have you steal to her chamber about midnight.

CAM. Do you think so? why, look you, brother, because you shall not think I'll gull you, take the key, lock me into the chamber, and say you shall be sure of me.

FLAM. In troth, I will; I'll be your jailer once. But have you ne'er a false door?

CAM. A pox on't, as I am a Christian! Tell me to-morrow how scurvily she takes my unkind parting.

FLAM. I will.

CAM. Didst thou not mark the jest of the silkworm? Good-night: in faith, I will use this trick often.

FLAM. Do, do, do.> [*Exit* CAMILLO; *and* FLAMINEO *locks the door on him.*]

So now you are safe. Ha, ha, ha! thou entanglest thyself in thine own work like a silkworm. Come, sister; darkness hides your blush. Women are like curst[18] dogs: civility keeps them tied all daytime, but they are let loose at midnight; then they do most good, or most mischief. —[*Calling softly.*] My lord, my lord!

Re-enter BRACHIANO. ZANCHE *brings out a carpet, spreads it, and lays on it two fair cushions.*

BRACH. Give credit, I could wish time would stand still,
And never end this interview, this hour:
But all delight doth itself soon'st devour.

Enter CORNELIA *behind, listening.*

Let me into your bosom, happy lady,
Pour out, instead of eloquence, my vows.
Loose me not, madam; for, if you forgo me,
I am lost eternally.

VIT. Sir, in the way of pity,
I wish you heart-whole.

BRACH. You are a sweet physician.

VIT. Sure, sir, a loathëd cruelty in ladies
Is as to doctors many funerals;
It takes away their credit.

BRACH. Excellent creature!
We call the cruel fair: what name for you
That are so merciful? [*Embraces her.*

ZAN. <See, now they close.

FLAM. Most happy union!>

CORN. <My fears are fall'n upon me: O, my heart!
My son the pander! now I find our house
Sinking to ruin. Earthquakes leave behind,
Where they have tyrannized, iron, or lead, or stone;
But, woe to ruin, violent lust leaves none!>

BRACH. What value is this jewel?

VIT. 'Tis the ornament
Of a weak fortune.

BRACH. In sooth, I'll have it; nay, I will but change
My jewel for your jewel.

[15] gadflies.
[16] magnet.
[17] royal journey.
[18] ill-tempered.

FLAM. <Excellent!
His jewel for her jewel: well put in, duke.>
BRACH. Nay, let me see you wear it.
VIT. Here, sir?
[*Puts it on her bosom.*
BRACH. Nay, lower, you shall wear my jewel lower.
FLAM. <That's better; she must wear his jewel lower.>
VIT. To pass away the time, I'll tell your grace
A dream I had last night.
BRACH. Most wishedly.
VIT. A foolish idle dream:
Methought I walked, about the mid of night,
Into a churchyard, where a goodly yew-tree
Spread her large root in ground. Under that yew,
As I sate sadly leaning on a grave
Chequered with cross sticks, there came stealing in
Your duchess and my husband: one of them
A pickaxe bore, the other, a rusty spade;
And in rough terms they 'gan to challenge me
About this yew.
BRACH. That tree?
VIT. This harmless yew.
They told me my intent was to root up
That well-grown yew, and plant i' the stead of it
A withered blackthorn; and for that they vowed
To bury me alive. My husband straight
With pickaxe gan to dig, and your fell duchess
With shovel, like a Fury, voided out
The earth, and scattered bones. Lord, how, methought,
I trembled! and yet, for all this terror,
I could not pray.
FLAM. <No; the devil was in your dream.>
VIT. When to my rescue there arose, methought,
A whirlwind, which let fall a massy arm
From that strong plant;
And both were struck dead by that sacred yew,
In that base shallow grave that was their due.
FLAM. <Excellent devil! she hath taught him in a dream
To make away his duchess and her husband.>
BRACH. Sweetly shall I interpret this your dream.
You are lodged within his arms who shall protect you
From all the fevers of a jealous husband,
From the poor envy of our phlegmatic duchess.
I'll seat you above law and above scandal;
Give to your thoughts the invention of delight,
And the fruition; nor shall government
Divide me from you longer than a care
To keep you great: you shall to me at once
Be dukedom, health, wife, children, friends, and all.
CORN., *coming forward*. Woe to light hearts! they still forerun our fall.
FLAM. What Fury raised thee up?—Away, away! [*Exit* ZANCHE.
CORN. What make you here, my lord, this dead of night?
Never dropped mildew on a flower here
Till now.
FLAM. I pray, will you go to bed, then,
Lest you be blasted?
CORN. O, that this fair garden
Had with all poisoned herbs of Thessaly
At first been planted; made a nursery
For witchcraft, rather than a burial plot
For both your honors!
VIT. Dearest mother, hear me.
CORN. O, thou dost make my brow bend to the earth,
Sooner than nature! See, the curse of children!
In life they keep us frequently in tears;
And in the cold grave leave us in pale fears.
BRACH. Come, come, I will not hear you.
VIT. Dear my lord—

CORN. Where is thy duchess now, adulterous duke? [461
Thou little dreamd'st this night she is come to Rome.
FLAM. How! come to Rome!
VIT. The duchess!
BRACH. She had been better—
CORN. The lives of princes should like dials move,
Whose regular example is so strong
They make the times by them go right or wrong. [471
FLAM. So; have you done?
CORN. Unfortunate Camillo!
VIT. I do protest, if any chaste denial,
If anything but blood could have allayed
His long suit to me—
CORN. I will join with thee,
To the most woeful end e'er mother kneeled: [479
If thou dishonor thus thy husband's bed,
Be thy life short as are the funeral tears
In great men's—
BRACH. Fie, fie, the woman's mad.
CORN. Be thy act Judas-like—betray in kissing!
Mayst thou be envied during his short breath,
And pitied like a wretch after his death!
VIT. O me accurst! [*Exit.*
FLAM. Are you out of your wits, [490 my lord?
I'll fetch her back again?
BRACH. No, I'll to bed:
Send Doctor Julio to me presently.—
Uncharitable woman! thy rash tongue
Hath raised a fearful and prodigious storm:
Be thou the cause of all ensuing harm.
[*Exit.*
FLAM. Now, you that stand so [500 much upon your honor,
Is this a fitting time o' night, think you,
To send a duke home without e'er a man?
I would fain know where lies the mass of wealth
Which you have hoarded for my maintenance,
That I may bear my beard out of the level
Of my lord's stirrup. [510
CORN. What! because we are poor,
Shall we be vicious?
FLAM. Pray, what means have you
To keep me from the galleys or the gallows?
My father proved himself a gentleman,
Sold all's land, and, like a fortunate fellow,
Died ere the money was spent. You brought me up [520
At Padua, I confess, where, I protest,
For want of means (the university judge me),
I have been fain to heel my tutor's stockings,
At least seven years; conspiring with a beard
Made me a graduate; then to this duke's service.
I visited the court, whence I returned [530
More courteous, more lecherous by far,
But not a suit the richer; and shall I,
Having a path so open and so free
To my preferment, still retain your milk
In my pale forehead? no, this face of mine
I'll arm, and fortify with lusty wine,
'Gainst shame and blushing.
CORN. O, that I ne'er had borne thee!
FLAM. So would I; [540
I would the common'st courtezan in Rome
Had been my mother, rather than thyself.
Nature is very pitiful to whores,
To give them but few children, yet those children
Plurality of fathers: they are sure
They shall not want. Go, go,
Complain unto my great lord cardinal;
Yet may be he will justify the act. [551
Lycurgus wondered much men would provide
Good stallions for their mares, and yet would suffer
Their fair wives to be barren.
CORN. Misery of miseries! [*Exit.*
FLAM. The duchess come to court! I like not that.
We are engaged to mischief, and must on: [561

As rivers, to find out the occän,
Flow with crook bendings beneath forcëd banks,
Or as we see, to aspire some mountain's top,
The way ascends not straight, but imitates [568
The subtle foldings of a winter's snake;
So who knows policy and her true aspéct
Shall find her ways winding and indirect.

ACT TWO

Scene I

Isabella *and* Giovanni *and* Jaques *the Moor have arrived in Rome and been welcomed to the house of* Francisco. Monticelso *is also present.*

Fran. Have you not seen your husband since you arrived?
Isa. Not yet, sir.
Fran. Surely he is wondrous kind.
If I had such a dove-house as Camillo's,
I would set fire on't, were't but to destroy
The pole-cats that haunt to it.— [11

Enter Marcello.

My sweet cousin! [1]
Giov. Lord uncle, you did promise me a horse
And armor.
Fran. That I did, my pretty cousin.—
Marcello, see it fitted.
Mar. My lord, the duke is here.
Fran. Sister, away! you must not yet be seen. [21
Isa. I do beseech you,
Entreat him mildly; let not your rough tongue
Set us at louder variance: all my wrongs
Are freely pardoned; and I do not doubt,
As men, to try the precious unicorn's horn,
Make of the powder a preservative circle,
And in it put a spider, so these arms [30
Shall charm his poison, force it to obeying,
And keep him chaste from an infected straying.

[1] Here used in sense of "nephew."

Fran. I wish it may. Be gone. Void the chamber.—[*Exeunt* Isabella, Giovanni, *and* Jaques.

Enter Brachiano *and* Flamineo, *by another door.* [39

You are welcome: will you sit?—I pray, my lord,
Be you my orator, my heart's too full;
I'll second you anon.
Mont. Ere I begin,
Let me entreat your grace forgo all passion,
Which may be raisëd by my free discourse.
Brach. As silent as i' the church: you may proceed. [50
Mont. It is a wonder to your noble friends,
That you, [who] have, as 'twere, entered the world
With a free sceptre in your able hand,
And have to th' use of nature well applied
High gifts of learning, should in your prime age
Neglect your awful throne for the soft down [61
Of an insatiate bed. O, my lord,
The drunkard after all his lavish cups
Is dry, and then is sober; so at length,
When you awake from this lascivious dream,
Repentance then will follow, like the sting
Placed in the adder's tail. Wretched are princes [69
When fortune blasteth but a petty flower
Of their unwieldly crowns or ravisheth
But one pearl from their sceptres; but, alas,
When they to wilful shipwreck lose good fame,
All princely titles perish with their name!
Brach. You have said, my lord.
Mont. Enough to give you taste
How far I am from flattering your greatness. [80
Brach. Now you that are his second, what say you?
Do not like young hawks fetch a course about:

Your game flies fair and for you.
FRAN. Do not fear it:
I'll answer you in your own hawking phrase:
Some eagles that should gaze upon the sun [90
Seldom soar high, but take their lustful ease,
Since they from dunghill birds their prey can seize.
You know Vittoria?
BRACH. Yes.
FRAN. You shift your shirt there,
When you retire from tennis?
BRACH. Happily.[2]
FRAN. Her husband is lord of a poor fortune; [101
Yet she wears cloth of tissue.
BRACH. What of this?—
Will you urge that, my good lord cardinal,
As part of her confession at next shrift,
And know from whence it sails?
FRAN. She is your strumpet.
BRACH. Uncivil sir, there's hemlock in thy breath, [110
And that black slander. Were she a whore of mine,
All thy loud cannons, and thy borrowed Switzers,
Thy galleys nor thy sworn confederates,
Durst not supplant her.
FRAN. Let's not talk on thunder.
Thou hast a wife, our sister: would I had given
Both her white hands to death, bound and locked fast [121
In her last winding-sheet, when I gave thee
But one!
BRACH. Thou hadst given a soul to God, then.
FRAN. True:
Thy ghostly father, with all's absolution,
Shall ne'er do so by thee.
BRACH. Spit thy poison! [130
FRAN. I shall not need; lust carries her sharp whip
At her own girdle. Look to't, for our anger
Is making thunder-bolts.

[2] Perhaps.

BRACH. Thunder? in faith,
They are but crackers.
FRAN. We'll end this with the cannon.
BRACH. Thou'lt get naught by it but iron in thy wounds [140
And gunpowder in thy nostrils.
FRAN. Better that
Than change perfumes for plasters.
BRACH. Pity on thee!
'Twere good you'd show your slaves or men condemned
Your new-ploughed forehead. Defiance! and I'll meet thee,
Even in a thicket of thy ablest men.
MONT. My lords, you shall not word it any further [151
Without a milder limit.
FRAN. Willingly.
BRACH. Have you proclaimed a triumph, that you bait
A lion thus?
MONT. My lord!
BRACH. I am tame, I am tame, sir.
FRAN. We send unto the duke for conference [160
'Bout levies 'gainst the pirates; my lord duke
Is not at home: we come ourself in person;
Still my lord duke is busied. But we fear,
When Tiber to each prowling passenger
Discovers flocks of wild ducks, then, my lord
('Bout moulting time I mean), we shall be certain [170
To find you sure enough and speak with you.
BRACH. Ha!
FRAN. A mere tale of a tub, my words are idle;
But to express the sonnet by natural reason:
When stags grow melancholic, you'll find the season.
MONT. No more, my lord: here comes a champion [181
Shall end the difference between you both,

Re-enter GIOVANNI.

Your son, the Prince Giovanni. See, my lords,

What hopes you store in him: this is a casket
For both your crowns, and should be held like dear.
Now is he apt for knowledge; therefore know,
It is a more direct and even way
To train to virtue those of princely blood
By examples than by precepts: if by examples,
Whom should he rather strive to imitate
Than his own father? be his pattern, then;
Leave him a stock of virtue that may last,
Should fortune rend his sails and split his mast.

BRACH. Your hand, boy; growing to a soldier?

GIO. Give me a pike.

FRAN. What, practising your pike so young, fair coz?

GIO. Suppose me one of Homer's frogs, my lord,
Tossing my bullrush thus. Pray, sir, tell me,
Might not a child of good discretiön
Be leader to an army?

FRAN. Yes, cousin, a young prince
Of good discretion might.

GIO. Say you so?
Indeed, I have heard 'tis fit a general
Should not endanger his own person oft;
So that he make a noise when he's o' horseback,
Like a Dansk[3] drummer. O, 'tis excellent!
He need not fight: methinks his horse as well
Might lead an army for him. If I live,
I'll charge the French foe in the very front
Of all my troops, the foremost man.

FRAN. What, what!

GIO. And will not bid my soldiers up and follow,
But bid them follow me.

BRACH. Forward lapwing!
He flies with the shell on's head.

FRAN. Pretty cousin!

GIO. The first year, uncle, that I go to war,
All prisoners that I take I will set free
Without their ransom.

FRAN. Ha, without their ransom?
How, then, will you reward your soldiërs
That took those prisoners for you?

GIO. Thus, my lord;
I'll marry them to all the wealthy widows
That fall that year.

FRAN. Why, then, the next year following,
You'll have no men to go with you to war.

GIO. Why, then, I'll press the women to the war,
And then the men will follow.

MONT. Witty prince!

FRAN. See, a good habit makes a child a man,
Whereas a bad one makes a man a beast.
Come, you and I are friends.

BRACH. Most wishëdly,
Like bones which, broke in sunder and well set,
Knit the more strongly.

FRAN. Call Camillo hither.

[*Exit* MARCELLO.

You have received the rumor, how Count Lodowick
Is turned a pirate?

BRACH. Yes.

FRAN. We are now preparing
Some ships, to fetch him in.

Re-enter ISABELLA.

Behold your duchess.
We now will leave you, and expect from you
Nothing but kind entreaty.

BRACH. You have charmed me.—

[*Exeunt* FRANCISCO, MONTICELSO, *and* GIOVANNI. FLAMINEO *withdraws into the background.*

You are in health, we see.

ISA. And above health,
To see my lord well.

BRACH. So! I wonder much
What amorous whirlwind hurried you to Rome.

ISA. Devotiön, my lord.

[3] Danish.

BRACH. Devotiön?
Is your soul charged with any grievous sin?
ISA. 'Tis burdened with too many; and I think,
The oftener that we cast our reckonings up,
Our sleeps will be the sounder.
BRACH. Take your chamber!
ISA. Nay, my dear lord, I will not have you angry:
Doth not my absence from you, now two months,
Merit one kiss?
BRACH. I do not use to kiss.
If that will dispossess your jealousy,
I'll swear it to you.
ISA. O my lovëd lord,
I do not come to chide. My jealousy?
I am to learn what that Italian means.
You are as welcome to these longing arms
As I to you a virgin. [*Kisses him.*
BRACH. O, your breath!
Out upon sweetmeats and continued physic!
The plague is in them!
ISA. You have oft, for these two lips,
Neglected cassia or the natural sweets
Of the spring-violet: they are not yet much withered.
My lord, I should be merry: these your frowns
Show in a helmet lovely; but on me,
In such a peaceful interview, methinks
They are too-too roughly knit.
BRACH. O, dissemblance!
Do you bandy factions 'gainst me? have you learnt
The trick of impudent baseness, to complain
Unto your kindred?
ISA. Never, my dear lord.
BRACH. Must I be hunted out? or was't your trick
To meet some amorous gallant here in Rome,
That must supply our discontinuance?
ISA. I pray, sir, burst my heart; and in my death
Turn to your ancient pity, though not love.
BRACH. Because your brother is the corpulent duke,
That is, the great duke, 'sdeath, I shall not shortly
Racket away five hundred crowns at tennis,
But it shall rest upon recórd! I scorn him
Like a shaved Polack;[4] all his reverend wit
Lies in his wardrobe; he's a discreet fellow,
When he is made up in his robes of state.
Your brother, the great duke, because h'as galleys
And now and then ransacks a Turkish fly-boat
(Now all the hellish Furies take his soul!)
First made this match: accursëd be the priest
That sang the wedding mass, and even my issue!
ISA. O, too-too far you have cursed!
BRACH. Your hand I'll kiss;
This is the latest ceremony of my love.
Henceforth I'll never lie with thee; by this,
This wedding-ring; I'll ne'er more lie with thee;
And this divorce shall be as truly kept
As if the judge had doomed it. Fare you well:
Our sleeps are severed.
ISA. Forbid it, the sweet union
Of all things blessëd! why, the saints in Heaven
Will knit their brows at that.
BRACH. Let not thy love
Make me an unbeliever; this my vow
Shall never, on my soul, be satisfied
With my repentance; let thy brother rage
Beyond a horrid tempest or sea-fight,
My vow is fixëd.
ISA. O my winding-sheet!
Now shall I need thee shortly.—Dear my lord,
Let me hear once more what I would not hear:
Never?

[4] Pole.

BRACH. Never.
ISA. O my unkind lord! may your [390
sins find mercy,
As I upon a woeful widowed bed
Shall pray for you, if not to turn your
eyes
Upon your wretched wife and hopeful
son,
Yet that in time you'll fix them upon
Heaven!
BRACH. No more: go, go complain to
the great duke. [400
ISA. No, my dear lord; you shall have
present witness
How I'll work peace between you. I
will make
Myself the author of your cursëd vow:
I have some cause to do it; you have
none.
Conceal it, I beseech you, for the weal
Of both your dukedoms, that you
wrought the means [410
Of such a separation: let the fault
Remain with my supposëd jealousy;
And think with what a piteous and rent
heart
I shall perform this sad ensuing part.

Re-enter FRANCISCO *and* MONTICELSO.

BRACH. Well, take your course.—My
honorable brother!
FRAN. Sister!—This is not well, my
lord.—Why, sister!— [420
She merits not this welcome.
BRACH. Welcome, say?
She hath given a sharp welcome.
FRAN. Are you foolish?
Come, dry your tears: is this a modest
course
To better what is naught, to rail and
weep?
Grow to a reconcilement, or, by Heaven,
I'll ne'er more deal between you. [430
ISA. Sir, you shall not;
No, though Vittoria, upon that condition,
Would become honest.
FRAN. Was your husband loud,
Since we departed?
ISA. By my life, sir, no;
I swear by that I do not care to lose.
Are all these ruins of my former beauty
Laid out for a whore's triumph?
FRAN. Do you hear? [440
Look upon other women, with what
patience
They suffer these slight wrongs; with
what justice
They study to requite them: take that
course.
ISA. O, that I were a man, or that I
had power
To execute my apprehended wishes!
I would whip some with scorpions. [450
FRAN. What! turned Fury?
ISA. To dig the strumpet's eyes out;
let her lie
Some twenty months a-dying; to cut off
Her nose and lips, pull out her rotten
teeth,
Preserve her flesh like mummia, for
trophies
Of my just anger! Hell, to my affliction,
Is mere snow-water. By your favor, sir—
Brother, draw near, and my lord [461
cardinal—
Sir, let me borrow of you but one kiss:
Henceforth I'll never lie with you, by
this,
This wedding-ring.
FRAN. How? ne'er more lie with him?
ISA. And this divorce shall be as truly
kept [469
As if in throngëd court a thousand ears
Had heard it and a thousand lawyers'
hands
Sealed to the separation.
BRACH. Ne'er lie with me?
ISA. Let not my former dotage
Make thee an unbeliever: this my vow
Shall never, on my soul, be satisfied
With my repentance; *manet alta mente
repostum.*
FRAN. Now, by my birth, you are a [480
foolish, mad,
And jealous woman.
BRACH. You see 'tis not my seeking.
FRAN. Was this your circle of pure
unicorn's horn
You said should charm your lord? now,
horns upon thee,
For jealousy deserves them! Keep your
vow,

And take your chamber.
Isa. No, sir; I'll presently to Padua;
I will not stay a minute.
Mont. O good madam!
Brach. 'Twere best to let her have her humor:
Some half-day's journey will bring down her stomach,
And then she'll turn in post.
Fran. To see her come
To my lord cardinal for a dispensation
Of her rash vow will beget excellent laughter.
Isa. <Unkindness, do thy office; poor heart, break:
Those are the killing griefs which dare not speak.>
[*Exit.*

Re-enter Marcello, *with* Camillo.

Mar. <Camillo's come, my lord.
Fran. Where's the commission?
Mar. 'Tis here.
Fran. Give me the signet.>
[*Exeunt* Francisco, Monticelso, Camillo, *and* Marcello.

Flam. My lord, do you mark their whispering? I will compound a medicine, out of their two heads, stronger than garlic, deadlier than stibium:[5] the cantharides, which are scarce seen to stick upon the flesh when they work to the heart, shall not do it with more silence or invisible cunning.

Brach. About the murder?

Flam. They are sending him to Naples; but I'll send him to Candy.

Enter Doctor Julio.[6]

Here's another property too.

Brach. Oh, the doctor!

Flam. A poor quack-salving knave, my lord; one that should have been lashed for's lechery, but that he confessed a judgment, had an execution laid upon him, and so put the whip to a *non plus*.

Doct. And was cozened, my lord, by an arranter knave than myself, and made pay all the colorable[7] execution.

Flam. He will shoot pills into a man's guts shall make them have more ventages than a cornet or a lamprey; he will poison a kiss; and was once minded, for his masterpiece, because Ireland breeds no poison, to have prepared a deadly vapor in a Spaniard's fart that should have poisoned all Dublin.

Brach. O, Saint Anthony's fire!

Doct. Your secretary is merry, my lord.

Flam. O thou cursëd antipathy to nature!—Look, his eye's bloodshed,[8] like a needle a chirurgeon stitcheth a wound with.—Let me embrace thee, toad, and love thee, O thou abominable loathsome gargarism,[9] that will fetch up lungs, lights, heart, and liver, by scruples!

Brach. No more!—I must employ thee, honest doctor:
You must to Padua, and, by the way,
Use some of your skill for us.
Doct. Sir, I shall.
Brach. But, for Camillo?
Flam. He dies this night, by such a politic strain,
Men shall suppose him by's own engine slain.
But, for your duchess' death—
Doct. I'll make her sure.
Brach. Small mischiefs are by greater made secure.

Flam. Remember this, you slave; when knaves come to preferment, they rise as gallowses are raised i' the Low Countries, one upon another's shoulders.

Scene II

In another room in Francisco's *palace, he,* Monticelso, Camillo, *and* Marcello *are together.* Monticelso *hands* Camillo *a drawing.*

Mont. Here is an emblem, nephew, pray peruse it:
'Twas thrown in at your window.[10]
Cam. At my window?
Here is a stag, my lord, hath shed his horns;

[5] antimony.
[6] We are not told what he is doing in Francisco's palace.
[7] fictitious.
[8] bloodshot.
[9] gargle.
[10] It does not occur to Camillo to ask the Cardinal how he knows, or how it came into his possession.

And for the loss of them the poor beast weeps:
The word, *"Inopem me copia fecit."*
MONT. That is,
"Plenty of horns hath made him poor of horns."
CAM. What should this mean?
MONT. I'll tell you: 'tis given out You are a cuckold.
CAM. Is it given out so?
I had rather such report as that, my lord,
Should keep within doors.
FRAN. Have you any children?
CAM. None, my lord.
FRAN. You are the happier. I'll tell you a tale.
CAM. Pray, my lord.
FRAN. An old tale:
Upon a time Phoebus, the god of light,
Or him we call the Sun, would needs be married.
The gods gave their consent; and Mercury
Was sent to voice it to the general world.
But what a piteous cry there straight arose
Amongst smiths and felt-makers, brewers and cooks,
Reapers and butterwomen, amongst
fishmongers,
And thousand other trades, which are annoyed
By his excessive heat! 'twas lamentable.
They came to Jupiter all in a sweat,
And do forbid the banns. A great fat cook
Was made their speaker, who entreats of Jove
That Phoebus might be gelded; for, if
now,
When there was but one sun, so many men
Were like to perish by his violent heat,
What should they do if he were marriëd,
And should beget more, and those children
Make fireworks like their father? So say I;
Only I will apply it to your wife:
Her issue, should not Providence prevent it,
Would make both nature, time, and man repent it.
MONT. Look you, cousin,
Go, change the air, for shame; see if your absence
Will blast your cornucopia. Marcello
Is chosen with you joint commissioner
For the relieving our Italian coast
From pirates.
MAR. I am much honored in't.
CAM. But, sir,
Ere I return, the stag's horns may be sprouted
Greater than those are shed.
MONT. Do not fear it:
I'll be your ranger.
CAM. You must watch i' the nights;
Then's the most danger.
FRAN. Farewell, good Marcello:
All the best fortunes of a soldier's wish
Bring you a-shipboard!
CAM. Were I not best, now I am turned soldier,
Ere that I leave my wife, sell all she hath,
And then take leave of her?
MONT. I expect good from you,
Your parting is so merry.
CAM. Merry, my lord! o' the captain's humor right;
I am resolvëd to be drunk this night.
[*Exeunt* CAMILLO *and* MARCELLO.
FRAN. So! 'twas well fitted: now shall we discern
How his wished absence will give violent way
To Duke Brachiano's lust.
MONT. Why, that was it;
To what scorned purpose else should we make choice
Of him for a sea-captain? and, besides,
Count Lodowick, which was rumored for a pirate,
Is now in Padua.
FRAN. Is't true?
MONT. Most certain:
I have letters from him, which are suppliant
To work his quick repeal from banishment:

He means to address himself for pensiön
Unto our sister duchess.
FRAN. Oh, 'tis well:
We shall not want his absence past six days.
I fain would have the Duke Brachiano run
Into notorious scandal; for there's naught
In such cursed dotage to repair his name,
Only the deep sense of some deathless shame.
MONT. It may be objected, I am dishonorable,
To play thus with my kinsman; but I answer,
For my revenge I'd stake a brother's life,
That, being wronged, durst not avenge himself.
FRAN. Come, to observe this strumpet.
MONT. Curse of greatness!
Sure, he'll not leave her.
FRAN. There's small pity in't:
Like mistletoe on sear elms spent by weather,
Let him cleave to her, and both rot together. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

In a room in CAMILLO'S *house, at midnight the same night,* BRACHIANO *is closeted with a* CONJURER, *who has undertaken to show him strange things.*

BRACH. Now, sir, I claim your promise: 'tis dead midnight,
The time prefixed to show me, by your art,
How the intended murder of Camillo
And our loathed duchess grow to actiön.
CON. You have won me by your bounty to a deed
I do not often practise. Some there are
Which by sophistic tricks aspire that name,
Which I would gladly lose, of nigromancer;
As some that use to juggle upon cards,
Seeming to conjure, when indeed they cheat;
Others that raise up their confederate spirits
'Bout windmills, and endanger their own necks,
For making of a squib; and some there are
Will keep a curtal[11] to show juggling tricks,
And give out 'tis a spirit; besides these,
Such a whole realm of almanac- makers, figure-flingers,[12]
Fellows, indeed, that only live by stealth,
Since they do merely lie about stol'n goods:
They'd make men think the devil were fast and loose,
With speaking fustian Latin. Pray, sit down:
Put on this night-cap, sir, 'tis charmed; and now
I'll show you, by my strong commanding art,
The circumstance that breaks your duchess' heart.

A Dumb Show.[13]

Enter suspiciously JULIO *and* CHRISTOPHERO: *they draw a curtain where* BRACHIANO'S *picture is; they put on spectacles of glass, which cover their eyes and noses, and then burn perfumes afore the picture, and wash the lips of the picture; that done, quenching the fire, and putting off their spectacles, they depart laughing.*

Enter ISABELLA *in her nightgown, as to bed-ward, with lights after her,* COUNT LODOVICO, GIOVANNI, GUIDANTONIO,[14] *and others waiting on her: she kneels down as to prayers, then draws the curtain of the picture, does three reverences to it, and kisses it thrice; she faints, and will not suffer them to come near it; dies: sorrow expressed in* GIOVANNI *and* COUNT LODOVICO; *she is conveyed out solemnly.*

BRACH. Excellent! then she's dead?
CON. She's poisoned
By the fumed picture. 'Twas her custom nightly,

11 horse.
12 casters of horoscopes.
13 Shown, presumably, on the back-stage.
14 Professor Sampson suggests this should be "Gasparo, Antonelli."

Before she went to bed, to go and visit
Your picture, and to feed her eyes and lips
On the dead shadow. Doctor Julio,
Observing this, infects it with an oil
And other poisoned stuff, which presently
Did suffocate her spirits.
BRACH. Methought I saw
Count Lodowick there.
CON. He was: and by my art
I find he did most passionately dote
Upon your duchess. Now turn another way,
And view Camillo's far more politic fate.
Strike louder, music, from this charmëd ground,
To yield, as fits the act, a tragic sound!

The second Dumb Show.

Enter FLAMINEO, MARCELLO, CAMILLO, *with four more, as captains; they drink healths, and dance: a vaulting-horse is brought into the room:* MARCELLO *and two more whispered out of the room, while* FLAMINEO *and* CAMILLO *strip themselves into their shirts, as to vault; they compliment who shall begin: as* CAMILLO *is about to vault,* FLAMINEO *pitcheth him upon his neck, and, with the help of the rest, writhes his neck about; seems to see if it be broke, and lays him folded double, as 'twere, under the horse; makes signs to call for help;* MARCELLO *comes in, laments; sends for the* CARDINAL *and* DUKE, *who come forth with armed men; wonder at the act, command the body to be carried home; apprehend* FLAMINEO, MARCELLO, *and the rest, and go, as 'twere, to apprehend* VITTORIA.

BRACH. 'Twas quaintly done; but yet each circumstance
I taste not fully.
CON. O, 'twas most apparent:
You saw them enter, charged with their deep healths
To their boon voyage[15]; and, to second that,
Flamineo calls to have a vaulting-horse
Maintain their sport; the virtuous Marcello
Is innocently plotted forth the room;
Whilst your eye saw the rest, and can inform you
The engine of all.
BRACH. It seems Marcello and Flamineo
Are both committed.
CON. Yes, you saw them guarded;
And now they are come with purpose to apprehend
Your mistress, fair Vittoria. We are now
Beneath her roof: 'twere fit we instantly
Make out by some back-postern.
BRACH. Noble friend,
You bind me ever to you: this shall stand
As the firm seal annexëd to my hand;
It shall enforce a payment.
CON. Sir, I thank you.
[*Exit* BRACHIANO.
Both flowers and weeds spring when the sun is warm,
And great men do great good or else great harm.
[*Exit.*

SCENE IV

FRANCISCO *and* MONTICELSO *are, with their Chancellor and Register, in the mansion of the* CARDINAL, *discussing* VITTORIA'S *approaching trial.*

FRAN. You have dealt discreetly, to obtain the presence
Of all the grave lieger[16] ambassadors,
To hear Vittoria's trial.
MONT. 'Twas not ill;
For, sir, you know we have naught but circumstances
To charge her with, about her husband's death:
Their approbation, therefore, to the proofs
Of her black lust shall make her infamous
To all our neighboring kingdoms. I wonder
If Brachiano will be here.
FRAN. O fie.
'Twere impudence too palpable. [*Exeunt.*

[15] *bon voyage.*

[16] resident.

SCENE V

Into the courtyard of MONTICELSO'S *mansion come* FLAMINEO *and* MARCELLO *guarded, and a* LAWYER.

LAW. What, are you in by the week? so, I will try now whether thy wit be close prisoner. Methinks none should sit upon thy sister but old whore-masters.

FLAM. Or cuckolds; for your cuckold is your most terrible tickler of lechery. Whore-masters would serve; for none [10 are judges at tilting but those that have been old tilters.

LAW. My lord duke and she have been very private.

FLAM. You are a dull ass; 'tis threatened they have been very public.

LAW. If it can be proved they have but kissed one another—

FLAM. What then?

LAW. My lord cardinal will ferret them.

FLAM. A cardinal, I hope, will not [21 catch conies.

LAW. For to sow kisses (mark what I say), to sow kisses is to reap lechery; and, I am sure, a woman that will endure kissing is half won.

FLAM. True, her upper part, by that rule: if you will win her nether part too, you know what follows.

LAW. Hark; the ambassadors are [30 lighted.[17]

FLAM. <I do put on this feignëd garb of mirth
To gull suspicion.>

MAR. O my unfortunate sister
I would my dagger-point had cleft her heart
When she first saw Brachiano: you, 'tis said,
Were made his engine and his stalk-[40 ing-horse,
To undo my sister.

FLAM. I made a kind of path
To her and mine own preferment.

MAR. Your ruin.[18]

FLAM. Hum! thou art a soldier,
Follow'st the great duke, feed'st his victories,
As witches do their serviceable spirits,
Even with thy prodigal blood: what [50 hast got,
But, like the wealth of captains, a poor handful,
Which in thy palm thou bear'st as men hold water?
Seeking to gripe it fast, the frail reward
Steals through thy fingers.

MAR. Sir!

FLAM. Thou hast scarce maintenance
To keep thee in fresh shamois. [60

MAR. Brother!

FLAM. Hear me:
And thus, when we have even poured ourselves
Into great fights, for their ambitiön
Or idle spleen, how shall we find reward?
But, as we seldom find the mistletoe
Sacred to physic, or the builder oak,
Without a mandrake by it; so in our quest of gain, [70
Alas, the poorest of their forced dislikes
At a limb proffers, but at heart it strikes!
This is lamented doctrine.

MAR. Come, come.

FLAM. When age shall turn thee
White as a blooming hawthorn—

MAR. I'll interrupt you:
For love of virtue bear an honest heart,
And stride o'er every politic respect,
Which, where they most advance, [80 they most infect.
Were I your father, as I am your brother,
I should not be ambitiöus to leave you
A better patrimony.

FLAM. I'll think on't.—
The lord ambassadors. [*The Ambassadors pass over the stage severally.*

LAW. O my sprightly Frenchman!—
Do you know him? he's an admirable tilter. [90

FLAM. I saw him at last tilting: he showed like a pewter candlestick, fashioned like a man in armor, holding a tilting-staff in his hand, little bigger than a candle of twelve i' the pound.

LAW. O, but he's an excellent horseman.

FLAM. A lame one in his lofty tricks: he sleeps a-horseback, like a poulter.[19]

[17] alighted.
[18] The verse seems to require "To your ruin."
[19] poulterer.

LAW. Lo you, my Spaniard!
FLAM. He carries his face in's ruff, as I have seen a serving man carry glasses in a cypress hatband, monstrous steady, for fear of breaking: he looks like the claw of a blackbird, first salted, and then broiled in a candle.

ACT THREE

SCENE I

In a hall in MONTICELSO'S *mansion* FRANCISCO, MONTICELSO, *and six lieger Ambassadors,* FLAMINEO, MARCELLO, *the* LAWYER, *a Guard, and Spectators are gathered for the arraignment of* VITTORIA, *who stands proudly apart.*

Enter BRACHIANO.

MONT. Forbear, my lord, here is no place assigned you:
This business by his holiness is left
To our examination.
BRACH. May it thrive with you!
[*Lays a rich gown under him.*
FRAN. A chair there for his lordship!
BRACH. Forbear your kindness: an unbidden guest
Should travel as Dutchwomen go to church,
Bear their stools with them.
MONT. At your pleasure, sir.—
[*To* VITTORIA.] Stand to the table, gentlewoman.—Now, signior,
Fall to your plea.
LAW. *Domine judex, converte oculos in hanc pestem, mulierum corruptissimam.*
VIT. What's he?
FRAN. A lawyer that pleads against you.
VIT. Pray, my lord, let him speak his usual tongue;
I'll make no answer else.
FRAN. Why? you understand Latin.
VIT. I do, sir; but amongst this auditory
Which come to hear my cause, the half or more
May be ignorant in't.
MONT. Go on, sir.
VIT. By your favor,
I will not have my accusation clouded
In a strange tongue; all this assembly
Shall hear what you can charge me with.
FRAN. Signior,
You need not stand on't much; pray, change your language.
MONT. O, for God's sake!—Gentlewoman, your credit
Shall be more famous by it.
LAW. Well, then, have at you!
VIT. I am at the mark, sir: I'll give aim to you,
And tell you how near you shoot.
LAW. Most literated judges, please your lordships
So to connive your judgments to the view
Of this debauched and diversivolent[1] woman;
Who such a black concatenation
Of mischief hath effected, that to extirp
The memory of't, must be the con- summation
Of her and her projections—
VIT. What's all this?
LAW. Hold your peace:
Exorbitant sins must have exulceration.
VIT. Surely, my lords, this lawyer here hath swallowed
Some pothecaries' bills, or proclamations;
And now the hard and undigestible words
Come up, like stones we use give hawks for physic:
Why, this is Welsh to Latin.
LAW. My lords, the woman
Knows not her tropes nor figures, nor is perfect
In the academic derivation
Of grammatical elocution.
FRAN. Sir, your pains
Shall be well spared, and your deep eloquence
Be worthily applauded amongst those
Which understand you.
LAW. My good lord—
FRAN., *scornfully.* Sir,
Put up your papers in your fustian bag—
Cry mercy, sir, 'tis buckram—and accept
My notion of your learned verbosity.
LAW. I most graduatically[2] thank your lordship:

[1] malevolent.
[2] in the manner of a graduate.

I shall have use for them elsewhere. [90
[*Exit.*
MONT. I shall be plainer with you, and paint out
Your follies in more natural red and white
Than that upon your cheek.
VIT. O, you mistake;
You raise a blood as noble in this cheek
As ever was your mother's.
MONT. I must spare you, till proof [100
cry "whore" to that.—
Observe this creature here, my honored lords,
A woman of a most prodigious spirit,
In her effected.
VIT. Honorable my lord,
It doth not suit a reverend cardinal
To play the lawyer thus.
MONT. O, your trade
Instructs your language.— [110
You see, my lords, what goodly fruit she seems;
Yet, like those apples travellers report
To grow where Sodom and Gomorrah stood,
I will but touch her, and you straight shall see
She'll fall to soot and ashes.
VIT. Your envenomed
Pothecary should do't. [120
MONT. I am resolved,
Were there a second Paradise to lose,
This devil would betray it.
VIT. O poor charity!
Thou art seldom found in scarlet.
MONT. Who knows not how, when several night by night
Her gates were choked with coaches, and her rooms
Outbraved the stars with several [130
kind of lights,
When she did counterfeit a prince's court
In music, banquets, and most riotous surfeits,
This whore, forsooth, was holy!
VIT. Ha, whore? what's that?
MONT. Shall I expound "whore" to you? sure, I shall:
I'll give their perfect character. They are, first, [140
Sweetmeats which rot the eater; in man's nostrils,
Poisoned perfumes: they are cozening alchemy;
Shipwrecks in calmest weather. What are whores?
Cold Russian winters, that appear so barren
As if that nature had forgot the spring:
They are the true material fire of hell; [150
Worse than those tributes i' the Low Countries paid,
Exactions upon meat, drink, garments, sleep,
Ay, even on man's perditiön, his sin:
They are those brittle evidences of law
Which forfeit all a wretched man's estate
For leaving out one syllable. What are whores?
They are those flattering bells have [160
all one tune,
At weddings and at funerals. Your rich whores
Are only treasuries by extortion filled,
And emptied by cursed riot. They are worse,
Worse than dead bodies which are begged at gallows,
And wrought upon by surgeons, to teach man [170
Wherein he is imperfect. What's a whore?
She's like the guilty counterfeited coin
Which, whosoe'er first stamps it, brings in trouble
All that receive it.
VIT. This character scapes me.
MONT. You, gentlewoman,
Take from all beasts and from all minerals [180
Their deadly poison—
VIT. Well, what then?
MONT. I'll tell thee;
I'll find in thee a pothecary's shop,
To sample them all.
FRENCH AMB. She hath lived ill.
ENGLISH AMB. True; but the cardinal's too bitter.
MONT. You know what "whore" is. Next the devil adultery [190
Enters the devil murder.

FRAN. Your unhappy Husband is dead.
VIT. O, he's a happy husband: Now he owes nature nothing.
FRAN. And by a vaulting-engine.
MONT. An active plot; He jumped into his grave.
FRAN. What a prodigy was't That from some two yards' height a slender man Should break his neck!
MONT. I' the rushes!
FRAN. And, what's more, Upon the instant lose all use of speech, All vital motion, like a man had lain Wound up three days. Now mark each circumstance.
MONT. And look upon this creature was his wife. She comes not like a widow; she comes armed With scorn and impudence: is this a mourning habit?
VIT. Had I foreknown his death, as you suggest, I would have bespoke my mourning.
MONT. O, you are cunning.
VIT. You shame your wit and judgment, To call it so. What! is my just defence By him that is my judge called "impudence"? Let me appeal, then, from this Christian court To the uncivil Tartar.
MONT. See, my lords, She scandals our proceedings.
VIT. Humbly thus, Thus low, to the most worthy and respected Lieger ambassadors, my modesty And womanhood I tender; but withal, So entangled in a cursëd accusation, That my defence, of force, like Portia's,[3] Must personate masculine virtue.—To the point: Find me but guilty, sever head from body, We'll part good friends: I scorn to hold my life At yours or any man's entreaty, sir.
ENGLISH AMB. She hath a brave spirit.
MONT. Well, well, such counterfeit jewels Make true ones oft suspected.
VIT. You are deceived: For know, that all your strict-combinëd heads Which strikes against this mine of diamonds Shall prove but glassen hammers: they shall break. These are but feignëd shadows of my evils: Terrify babes, my lord, with painted devils; I am past such needless palsy. For your names Of "whore" and "murderess," they proceed from you, As if a man should spit against the wind; The filth returns in's face.
MONT. Pray you, mistress, satisfy me one question: Who lodged beneath your roof that fatal night Your husband brake his neck?
BRACH., *rising from his seat.* That questiön Enforceth me break silence: I was there.
MONT. Your business?
BRACH. Why, I came to comfort her, And take some course for settling her estate, Because I heard her husband was in debt To you, my lord.
MONT. He was.
BRACH. And 'twas strangely feared That you would cozen her.
MONT. Who made you overseer?
BRACH. Why, my charity, my charity, which should flow From every generous and noble spirit To orphans and to widows.
MONT. Your lust.[4]
BRACH. Cowardly dogs bark loudest: sirrah priest, I'll talk with you hereafter. Do you hear?

[3] B, Perseus'.

[4] The metre seems to require "'Twas your lust."

The sword you frame of such an excellent temper
I'll sheathe in your own bowels.
There are a number of thy coat resemble
Your common post-boys.
MONT. Ha!
BRACH. Your mercenary post-boys:
Your letters carry truth, but 'tis your guise
To fill your mouths with gross and impudent lies. [*Exiturus.*
SER. My lord, your gown.
BRACH. Thou liest; 'twas my stool:
Bestow't upon thy master, that will challenge
The rest o' the household-stuff; for Brachiano
Was ne'er so beggarly to take a stool
Out of another's lodging: let him make
Vallance for his bed on't, or a demi-foot-cloth
For his most reverent moil.[5] Monticelso,
Nemo me impune lacessit.[6] [*Exit.*
MONT. Your champion's gone.
VIT. The wolf may prey the better.
FRAN. My lord, there's great suspicion of the murder,
But no sound proof who did it. For my part,
I do not think she hath a soul so black,
To act a deed so bloody: if she have,
As in cold countries husbandmen plant vines,
And with warm blood manure them, even so
One summer she will bear unsavory fruit,
And ere next spring wither both branch and root.
The act of blood let pass; only descend
To matter of incontinence.
VIT. I discern poison under your gilded pills.
MONT. Now the duke's gone, I will produce a letter,
Wherein 'twas plotted he and you should meet
At an apothecary's summer-house,
Down by the river Tiber—view't, my lords—
Where, after wanton bathing and the heat
Of a lascivious banquet—I pray read it:
I shame to speak the rest.
VIT. Grant I was tempted;
Temptatiön to lust proves not the act:
Casta est quam nemo rogavit.
You read his hot love to me; but you want
My frosty answer.
MONT. Frost i' the dog-days? strange!
VIT. Condemn you me for that the duke did love me?
So may you blame some fair and crystal river
For that some melancholic distracted man
Hath drowned himself in't.
MONT. Truly drowned, indeed.
VIT. Sum up my faults, I pray, and you shall find,
That beauty and gay clothes, a merry heart,
And a good stomach to [a] feast, are all,
All the poor crimes that you can charge me with.
In faith, my lord, you might go pistol flies;
The sport would be more noble.
MONT. Very good.
VIT. But take your course: it seems you have beggared me first,
And now would fain undo me. I have houses,
Jewels, and a poor remnant of crusadoes.[7]
Would those would make you charitable!
MONT. If the devil
Did ever take good shape, behold his picture.
VIT. You have one virtue left: you will not flatter me.
FRAN. Who brought this letter?
VIT. I am not compelled to tell you.
MONT. My lord duke sent to you a thousand ducats
The twelfth of August.
VIT. 'Twas to keep your cousin
From prison: I paid use[8] for't.
MONT. I rather think
'Twas interest for his lust.

[5] mule.
[6] No one wounds me with impunity.
[7] Portuguese coins worth about sixty cents apiece.
[8] interest.

VIT. Who says so
But yourself? if you be my accuser,
Pray, cease to be my judge: come from the bench;
Give in your evidence 'gainst me, and let these
Be moderators.[9] My lord cardinal,
Were your intelligencing ears as loving
As to my thoughts, had you an honest tongue,
I would not care though you pro- claimed them all.
MONT. Go to, go to!
After your goodly and vainglorious banquet,
I'll give you a choke-pear.
VIT. O' your own grafting?
MONT. You were born in Venice, honorably descended
From the Vittelli: 'twas my cousin's fate—
Ill may I name the hour—to marry you:
He bought you of your father.
VIT. Ha!
MONT. He spent there in six months
Twelve thousand ducats, and (to my acquaintance)[10]
Received in dowry with you not one julio:[11]
'Twas a hard pennyworth, the ware being so light.
I yet but draw the curtain; now to your picture:
You came from thence a most notorious strumpet;
And so you have continued.
VIT. My lord—
MONT. Nay, hear me;
You shall have time to prate. My Lord Brachiano—
Alas, I make but repetitiön
Of what is ordinary and Rialto talk,
And ballated, and would be played o' the stage,
But that vice many times finds such loud friends
That preachers are charmed silent.—
You gentlemen, Flamineo and Marcello,
The court hath nothing now to charge you with,

[9] judges. [10] knowledge.
[11] a silver coin worth about twelve cents.

Only you must remain upon your sureties
For your appearance.
FRAN. I stand for Marcello.
FLAM. And my lord duke for me.
MONT. For you, Vittoria, your public fault,
Joined to the condition of the present time,
Takes from you all the fruits of noble pity.
Such a corrupted trial have you made
Both of your life and beauty, and been styled
No less an ominous fate than blazing stars
To princes: here's your sentence: you are confined
Unto a house of convertites; and your bawd—
FLAM. <Who, I?>
MONT. The Moor.
FLAM. <O, I am a sound man again.>
VIT. A house of convertites! what's that?
MONT. A house
Of penitent whores.
VIT. Do the noblemen in Rome
Erect it for their wives, that I am sent
To lodge there?
FRAN. You must have patience.
VIT. I must first have vengeance.
I fain would know if you have your salvation
By patent, that you proceed thus.
MONT. Away with her!
Take her hence.
VIT. A rape! a rape!
MONT. How?
VIT. Yes, you have ravished justice;
Forced her to do your pleasure.
MONT. Fie, she's mad!
VIT. Die with those pills in your most cursëd maw
Should bring you health! or while you sit o' the bench
Let your own spittle choke you!—
MONT. She's turned Fury.
VIT. That the last day of judgment may so find you,
And leave you the same devil you were before!

Instruct me, some good horse-leech, to speak treason;
For, since you cannot take my life for deeds,
Take it for words! O woman's poor revenge,
Which dwells but in the tongue! I will not weep;
No, I do scorn to call up one poor tear
To fawn on your injustice. Bear me [500 hence
Unto this house of—what's your mitigating title?

MONT. Of convertites.

VIT. It shall not be a house of convertites;
My mind shall make it honester to me
Than the Pope's palace, and more peaceable
Than thy soul, though thou art a [510 cardinal.
Know this, and let it somewhat raise your spite:
Through darkness diamonds spread their richest light. [*Exit* VITTORIA, *with Guards, followed by Spectators.*

Re-enter BRACHIANO.

BRACH. Now you and I are friends, sir, we'll shake hands [519
In a friend's grave together; a fit place,
Being the emblem of soft peace, to atone [12] our hatred.

FRAN. Sir, what's the matter?

BRACH. I will not chase more blood from that loved cheek;
You have lost too much already: fare you well. [*Exit.*

FRAN. How strange these words sound! what's the interpretation? [529

FLAM. <Good; this is a preface to the discovery of the duchess' death: he carries it well. Because now I cannot counterfeit a whining passion for the death of my lady, I will feign a mad humor for the disgrace of my sister; and that will keep off idle questions. Treason's tongue hath a villainous palsy in't: I will talk to any man, hear no man, and for a time appear a politic madman.>

[*Exit.* [540

[12] reconcile.

Enter GIOVANNI *and* COUNT LODOVICO.

FRAN. How now, my noble cousin? what, in black?

GIO. Yes, uncle, I was taught to imitate you
In virtue, and you must imitate me
In colors of your garments. My sweet mother
Is—

FRAN. How! where? [550

GIO. Is there; no, yonder: indeed, sir, I'll not tell you,
For I shall make you weep.

FRAN. Is dead?

GIO. Do not blame me now:
I did not tell you so.

LOD. She's dead, my lord.

FRAN. Dead?

MONT. Blessed lady, thou art now above thy woes!— [560
Will't please your lordships to withdraw a little? [*Exeunt* AMBASSADORS.

GIO. What do the dead do, uncle? do they eat,
Hear music, go a-hunting, and be merry,
As we that live?

FRAN. No, coz; they sleep.

GIO. Lord, Lord, that I were dead!
I have not slept these six nights.—When do they wake? [570

FRAN. When God shall please.

GIO. Good God, let her sleep ever!
For I have known her wake an hundred nights,
When all the pillow where she laid her head
Was brine-wet with her tears. I am to complain to you, sir;
I'll tell you how they have used her now she's dead: [580
They wrapped her in a cruel fold of lead,
And would not let me kiss her.

FRAN. Thou didst love her.

GIO. I have often heard her say she gave me suck,
And it should seem by that she dearly loved me,
Since princes seldom do it.

FRAN. O, all of my poor sister that remains!— [590

Take him away, for God's sake! [*Exeunt* Giovanni, Lodovico, *and* Marcello.

Mont. How now, my lord?

Fran. Believe me, I am nothing but her grave;
And I shall keep her blessëd memory
Longed than thousand epitaphs. [*Exeunt* Francisco *and* Monticelso.

Scene II

Flamineo, *carrying out his idea of diverting suspicion from himself by feigning madness, steps from the* Monticelso *mansion into the courtyard, as if distracted.*

Flam. We endure the strokes like anvils or hard steel,
Till pain itself make us no pain to feel.
Who shall do me right now? Is this the end of service? I'd rather go weed [10 garlic; travel through France, and be mine own ostler; wear sheepskin linings, or shoes that stink of blacking; be entered into the list of the forty thousand pedlars in Poland.

Enter, from the house, the Ambassadors *of Savoy, France, and England, followed by* Lodovico *and* Marcello.

Would I had rotted in some surgeon's house at Venice, built upon the pox as [20 well as on piles, ere I had served Brachiano!

Savoy Am. You must have comfort.

Flam. Your comfortable words are like honey; they relish well in your mouth that's whole, but in mine that's wounded they go down as if the sting of the bee were in them. Oh, they have wrought their purpose cunningly, as if they would not seem to do it of mal- [30 ice! In this a politician imitates the devil, as the devil imitates a cannon; wheresoever he comes to do mischief, he comes with his backside towards you.

French Amb. The proofs are evident.

Flam. Proof! 'twas corruption. O gold, what a god art thou! and O man, what a devil art thou to be tempted by that cursëd mineral! Your diversivolent lawyer, mark him; knaves turn inform- [40 ers, as maggots turn to flies; you may catch gudgeons with either. A cardinal! I would he would hear me: there's nothing so holy but money will corrupt and putrefy it, like victual under the line. You are happy in England, my lord: here they sell justice with those weights they press men to death with. O horrible salary!

English Amb. Fie, fie, Flamineo! [50

[*Exeunt* Ambassadors.

Flam. Bells ne'er ring well, till they are at their full pitch; and I hope yon cardinal shall never have the grace to pray well till he come to the scaffold. If they were racked now to know the confederacy!—but your noblemen are privileged from the rack; and well may, for a little thing would pull some of them a-pieces afore they came to their ar- [60 raignment. Religion, oh, how it is commedled[13] with policy! The first bloodshed in the world happened about religion. Would I were a Jew!

Mar. Oh, there are too many.

Flam. You are deceived: there are not Jews enough, priests enough, nor gentlemen enough.

Mar. How? [69

Flam. I'll prove it; for, if there were Jews enough, so many Christians would not turn usurers; if priests enough, one should not have six benefices; and, if gentlemen enough, so many early mushrooms, whose best growth sprang from a dunghill, should not aspire to gentility. Farewell: let others live by begging; be thou one of them, practice the art of Wolner in England, to swallow all's given thee; and yet let one purgation make [80 thee as hungry again as fellows that work in a saw-pit. I'll go hear the screech-owl.

Lod. <This was Brachiano's pander; and 'tis strange
That, in such open and apparent guilt
Of his adulterous sister, he dare utter
So scandalous a passion. I must wind him.[14]>

[13] commingled.
[14] track him by scent.

FLAM. <How dares this banished count return to Rome,
His pardon not yet purchased? I have heard
The deceased duchess gave him pension,
And that he came along from Padua
I' the train of the young prince. There's somewhat in't:
Physicians that cure poisons still do work
With counter-poisons.>
MAR. <Mark this strange encounter.>
FLAM., TO LODOVICO. The god of melancholy turn thy gall to poison,
And let the stigmatic wrinkles in thy face,
Like to the boisterous waves in a rough tide,
One still overtake another.
LOD. I do thank thee,
And I do wish ingeniously[15] for thy sake
The dog-days all year long.
FLAM. How croaks the raven?
Is our good duchess dead?
LOD. Dead.
FLAM. O fate!
Misfortune comes, like the coroner's business,
Huddle upon huddle.
LOD. Shalt thou and I join housekeeping?
FLAM. Yes, content:
Let's be unsociably sociable.
LOD. Sit some three days together, and discourse—
FLAM. Only with making faces: lie in our clothes.
LOD. With faggots for our pillows—
FLAM. And be lousy.
LOD. In taffata linings; that's genteel melancholy;
Sleep all day—
FLAM. Yes; and, like your melancholic hare,
Feed after midnight.

Enter ANTONELLI *and* GASPARO, *laughing and talking.*

We are observed: see how yon couple grieve!
LOD. What a strange creature is a laughing fool!
As if man were created to no use
But only to show his teeth.
FLAM. I'll tell thee what:
It would do well, instead of looking-glasses,
To set one's face each morning by a saucer
Of a witch's congealed blood.
LOD. Precious gue![16]
We'll never part.
FLAM. Never, till the beggary of courtiers,
The discontent of churchmen, want of soldiers
And all the creatures that hang manacled,
Worse than strappadoed, on the lowest felly
Of Fortune's wheel, be taught, in our two lives,
To scorn that world which life of means deprives.
ANT. My lord, I bring good news. The Pope, on's death-bed,
At the earnest suit of the Great Duke of Florence,
Hath signed your pardon, and restored unto you—
LOD. I thank you for your news.—Look up again,
Flamineo; see my pardon.
FLAM. Why do you laugh?
There was no such condition in our covenant.
LOD. Why?
FLAM. You shall not seem a happier man than I:
You know our vow, sir; if you will be merry,
Do it i' the like posture as if some great man
Sate while his enemy were executed;
Though it be very lechery unto thee,
Do't with a crabbëd politician's face.
LOD. Your sister is a damnable whore.
FLAM. Ha!
LOD. Look you, I spake that laughing.
FLAM. Dost ever think to speak again?
LOD. Do you hear?
Wilt sell me forty ounces of her blood
To water a mandrake?
FLAM. Poor lord, you did vow
To live a lousy creature.

[15] ingenuously.
[16] rogue.

LOD. Yes.
FLAM. Like one
That had for ever forfeited the daylight
By being in debt.
LOD. Ha, ha!
FLAM. I do not greatly wonder you do break;
Your lordship learned't long since; but I'll tell you—
LOD. What?
FLAM. And't shall stick by you—
LOD. I long for it.
FLAM. This laughter scurvily becomes your face:
If you will not be melancholy, be angry.
[*Strikes him.*
See, now I laugh too.
MAR. You are to blame: [*pushing* FLAMINEO *out*] I'll force you hence.
LOD., *to* ANTONELLI *and* GASPARO, *who have seized hold of him.* Unhand me. [*Exeunt* MARCELLO *and* FLAMINEO.
That e'er I should be forced to right myself
Upon a pander!
ANT. My lord!
LOD. H'ad been as good
Met with his fist a thunderbolt.
GAS. How this shows!
LOD. Ud's death, how did my sword miss him? These rogues
That are most weary of their lives still scape
The greatest dangers.
A pox upon him! all his reputation,
Nay, all the goodness of his family,
Is not worth half this earthquake:
I learned it of no fencer to shake thus:
Come, I'll forget him, and go drink some wine.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

In a room in FRANCISCO'S *palace,* MONTICELSO *is endeavoring to ascertain* FRANCISCO'S *intentions; but* FRANCISCO *does not trust him sufficiently to reveal his policy.*

MONT. Come, come, my lord, untie your folded thoughts,
And let them dangle loose as a bride's hair:
Your sister's poisoned.
FRAN. Far be it from my thoughts
To seek revenge.
MONT. What, are you turned all marble?
FRAN. Shall I defy him, and impose a war
Most burdensome on my poor subjects' necks,
Which at my will I have not power to end?
You know, for all the murders, rapes, and thefts,
Committed in the horrid lust of war,
He that unjustly caused it first proceed
Shall find it in his grave and in his seed.
MONT. That's not the course I'd wish you; pray, observe me:
We see that undermining more prevails
Than doth the cannon; bear your wrongs concealed,
And, patient as the tortoise, let this camel
Stalk o'er your back unbruised: sleep with the lion,
And let this brood of secure foolish mice
Play with your nostrils, till the time be ripe
For the bloody audit and the fatal gripe:
Aim like a cunning fowler, close one eye,
That you the better may your game espy.
FRAN. Free me, my innocence, from treacherous acts!
I know there's thunder yonder, and I'll stand
Like a safe valley, which low bends the knee
To some aspiring mountain, since I know
Treason, like spiders weaving nets for flies,
By her foul work is found, and in it dies.
To pass away these thoughts, my honored lord,
It is reported you possess a book,
Wherein you have quoted,[17] by intelligence,[18]
The names of all notorious offenders
Lurking about the city.

[17] listed.
[18] news got from spies.

MONT. Sir, I do;
And some there are which call it my black book:
Well may the title hold; for, though it teach not
The art of conjuring, yet in it lurk
The names of many devils.
FRAN. Pray, let's see it.
MONT. I'll fetch it to your lordship. [*Exit.*
FRAN. <Monticelso,
I will not trust thee; but in all my plots
I'll rest as jealous as a town beseiged.
Thou canst not reach what I intend to act:
Your flax soon kindles, soon is out again;
But gold slow heats, and long will hot remain.>

Re-enter MONTICELSO. *He presents* FRANCISCO *with a book.*

MONT. 'Tis here, my lord.
FRAN. First, your intelligencers,[19] pray, let's see.
MONT. Their number rises strangely; and some of them
You'd take for honest men. Next are panders;
These are your pirates; and these following leaves
For base rogues that undo young gentlemen
By taking up commodities;[20] for politic bankrupts;
For fellows that are bawds to their own wives,
Only to put off horses and slight jewels,
Clocks, defaced plate, and such commodities,
At birth of their first children.
FRAN. Are there such?
MONT. These are for impudent bawds
That go in men's apparel; for usurers
That share with scriveners for their good reportage;
For lawyers that will antedate their writs:
And some divines you might find folded there,
But that I slip them o'er for conscience' sake.

19 informers.
20 goods which borrowers were forced to take instead of cash.

Here is a general catalogue of knaves:
A man might study all the prisons o'er,
Yet never attain this knowledge.
FRAN. Murderers!
Fold down the leaf, I pray.
Good my lord, let me borrow this strange doctrine.
MONT. Pray, use't, my lord.
FRAN. I do assure your lordship,
You are a worthy member of the state,
And have done infinite good in your discovery
Of these offenders.
MONT. Somewhat, sir.
FRAN. O God!
Better than tribute of wolves paid in England:[21]
'Twill hang their skins o' the hedge.
MONT. I must make bold
To leave your lordship.
FRAN. Dearly, sir, I thank you:
If any ask for me at court, report
You have left me in the company of knaves. [*Exit* MONTICELSO.
I gather now by this, some cunning fellow
That's my lord's officer, one that lately skipped
From a clerk's desk up to a justice' chair,
Hath made this knavish summons, and intends,
As the Irish rebels wont were to sell heads,
So to make prize of these. And thus it happens
Your poor rogues pay for't which have not the means
To present bribe in fist: the rest o' the band
Are razed out of the knaves' record; or else
My lord he winks at them with easy will;
His man grows rich; the knaves are the knaves still.
But to the use I'll make of it; it shall serve
To point me out a list of murderers,
Agents for any villainy. Did I want
Ten leash of courtezans, it would furnish me;

21 in the reign of King Edgar.

Nay, laundress three armies. That in so little paper
Should lie the undoing of so many men!
'Tis not so big as twenty declarations. [160
See the corrupted use some make of books:
Divinity, wrested by some factious blood,
Draws swords, swells battles, and o'erthrows all good.
To fashion my revenge more seriously,
Let me remember my dead sister's face:
Call for her picture? no, I'll close mine eyes, [169
And in a melancholic thought I'll frame
Her figure 'fore me.

Enter ISABELLA'S *ghost.*

Now I ha't: how strong
Imagination works! how she can frame
Things which are not! Methinks she stands afore me,
And by the quick idea of my mind,
Were my skill pregnant, I could draw her picture. [179
Thought, as a subtle juggler, makes us deem
Things supernatural, which yet have cause
Common as sickness. 'Tis my melancholy.—
How cam'st thou by thy death?—How idle am I
To question mine own idleness!—Did ever
Man dream awake till now?—Remove this object; [190
Out of my brain with't! What have I to do
With tombs or death-beds, funerals or tears,
That have to meditate upon revenge?
[*Exit Ghost.*
So, now 'tis ended, like an old wives' story.
Statesmen think often they see stranger sights [200
Than madmen. Come, to this weighty business:
My tragedy must have some idle mirth in't,
Else it will never pass. I am in love,
In love with Corombona; and my suit
Thus halts to her in verse.— [*Writes.*
I have done it rarely: O, the fate of princes!
I am so used to frequent flattery, [210
That, being alone, I now flatter myself;
[*Sealing what he has written.*] But it will serve; 'tis sealed. [*(Calling.)* Ho, there!]

Enter Servant.

Bear this
To the house of convertites, and watch your leisure [218
To give it to the hands of Corombona,
Or to the matron, when some followers
Of Brachiano may be by. Away! [*Exit Servant.*
He that deals all by strength, his wit is shallow:
When a man's head goes through, each limb will follow.
The engine for my business, bold Count Lodowick:
'Tis gold must such an instrument procure; [230
With empty fist no man doth falcons lure.
Brachiano, I am now fit for thy encounter:
Like the wild Irish, I'll ne'er think thee dead
Till I can play at football with thy head.
Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo.

ACT FOUR

SCENE I

FLAMINEO, *visiting the* MATRON *of the House of Convertites, has persuaded her to allow the* DUKE *to see* VITTORIA.

MAT. Should it be known the duke hath such recourse
To your imprisoned sister, I were like
To incur much damage by it.
FLAM. Not a scruple!
The Pope lies on his death-bed, and their heads [10
Are troubled now with other business
Than guarding of a lady.

Enter FRANCISCO'S SERVANT.

SER. <Yonder's Flamineo in conference
With the matrona.> Let me speak with you;
I would entreat you to deliver for me
This letter to the fair Vittoria—
MAT. I shall, sir.
SER. With all care and secrecy. [20
Hereafter you shall know me, and receive
Thanks for this courtesy. [*Exit.*
FLAM. How now? what's that?
MAT. A letter.
FLAM. To my sister? I'll see't delivered. [*Exit* MATRON.

Enter BRACHIANO.

BRACH. What's that you read, Flamineo?
FLAM. Look. [30
BRACH. Ha!
"To the most unfortunate, his best respected
Vittoria."—
Who was the messenger?
FLAM. I know not.
BRACH. No?
Who sent it?
FLAM. Ud's foot, you speak as if a man [40
Should know what fowl is coffined in a baked meat
Afore you cut it up.
BRACH. I'll open't, were't her heart. [*Opens it.*] What's here subscribed?
"Florence!" this juggling is gross and palpable:
I have found out the conveyance.—Read it, read it! [50
FLAM. "Your tears I'll turn to triumphs, be but mine:
Your prop is fall'n: I pity that a vine
Which princes heretofore have longed to gather,
Wanting supporters, now should fade and wither."
Wine, i' faith, my lord, with lees would serve his turn.—
"Your sad imprisonment I'll soon un- [60
charm,
And with a princely uncontrollëd arm
Lead you to Florence, where my love and care
Shall hang your wishes in my silver hair."—
A halter on his strange equivocation!—
"Nor for my years return me the sad willow:
Who prefer blossoms before fruit that's mellow?"— [71
Rotten, on my knowledge, with lying too long i' the bed-straw.—
"And all the lines of age this line convinces:
The gods never wax old, no more do princes."—
A pox on't, tear it; let's have no more atheists, for God's sake.
BRACH. Ud's death, I'll cut her into atomies,[1] [81
And let th' irregular north wind sweep her up,
And blow her into his nostrils! Where's this whore?
FLAM. That—what do you call her?
BRACH. Oh, I could be mad,
Prevent the curs'd disease she'll bring me to,
And tear my hair off! Where's this [90
changeable stuff?
FLAM. O'er head and ears in water, I assure you:
She is not for your wearing.
BRACH. In, you pander!
FLAM. What, me, my lord? am I your dog?
BRACH. A blood-hound!
Do you brave, do you stand me?
FLAM. Stand you! let those that [100
have diseases run;
I need no plasters.
BRACH. Would you be kicked?
FLAM. Would you have your neck broke?
I tell you, duke, I am not in Russia;
My shins must be kept whole.
BRACH. Do you know me?
FLAM. O, my lord, methodically:
As in this world there are degrees of [110
evils,
So in this world there are degrees of devils;

[1] little bits.

You're a great duke, I your poor secretary.
I do look now for a Spanish fig or an Italian salad[2] daily.

BRACH. Pander, ply your convoy,[3] and leave your prating. [119

FLAM. All your kindness to me is like that miserable courtesy of Polyphemus to Ulysses; you reserve me to be devoured last: you would dig turfs out of my grave to feed your larks; that would be music to you. Come, I'll lead you to her.

[*Starts to walk out backwards.*

BRACH. Do you face me?

FLAM. Oh, sir, I would not go before a politic enemy with my back towards him, though there were behind me a whirl- [130
pool.

SCENE II

Into VITTORIA'S *room in the House of Convertites, where the lady is passing the time as best she can, enter the angry* DUKE *and* FLAMINEO.

BRACH. Can you read, mistress? look upon that letter:
There are no characters nor hieroglyphics;
You need no comment: I am grown your receiver.
God's precious! you shall be a brave [10
great lady,
A stately and advanced whore.

VIT. Say, sir?

BRACH. Come, come, let's see your cabinet, discover
Your treasury of love-letters. Death and Furies!
I'll see them all.

VIT. Sir, upon my soul,
I have not any. Whence was this di- [20
rected?

BRACH. Confusion on your politic ignorance!
You are reclaimed, are you? I'll give you the bells,
And let you fly to the devil.

FLAM., *following up the hawking terms used.* Ware hawk, my lord!

VIT. "Florence"! this is some treacherous plot, my lord: [30

[2] Two common vehicles for the administering of poisons.
[3] take me to her.

To me he ne'er was lovely,[4] I protest,
So much as in my sleep.

BRACH. Right! they are plots.
Your beauty! Oh, ten thousand curses on't!
How long have I beheld the devil in crystal?
Thou hast led me, like an heathen sacrifice,
With music and with fatal yokes of [40
flowers,
To my eternal ruin. Woman to man
Is either a god or a wolf.

VIT. My lord,—

BRACH. Away!
We'll be as differing as two adamants[5];
The one shall shun the other. What, dost weep?
Procure but ten of thy dissembling trade,
Ye'd furnish all the Irish funerals [50
With howling past wild Irish.

FLAM. Fie, my lord!

BRACH. That hand, that cursëd hand, which I have wearied
With doting kisses!—O my sweetest duchess,
How lovely art thou now!—My loose thoughts
Scatter like quicksilver: I was be-witched; [60
For all the world speaks ill of thee.

VIT. No matter:
I'll live so now, I'll make that world recant,
And change her speeches. You did name your duchess.

BRACH. Whose death God pardon!

VIT. Whose death God revenge
On thee, most godless duke! [69

FLAM. <Now for two whirlwinds!>

VIT. What have I gained by thee but infamy?
Thou hast stained the spotless honor of my house,
And frighted thence noble society;
Like those which, sick o' the palsy and retain
Ill-scenting foxes 'bout them, are still shunned

[4] loving.
[5] magnets.

By those of choicer nostrils. What do you call this house?
Is this your palace? did not the judge style it
A house of penitent whores? who sent me to it?
Who hath the honor to advance Vittoria
To this incontinent college? is't not you?
Is't not your high preferment? Go, go brag
How many ladies you have undone like me.
Fare you well, sir; let me hear no more of you.
I had a limb corrupted to an ulcer;
But I have cut it off; and now I'll go
Weeping to Heaven on crutches. For your gifts,
I will return them all; and I do wish
That I could make you full executor
To all my sins. Oh, that I could toss myself
Into a grave as quickly! for all thou art worth
I'll not shed one tear more; I'll burst first. [*She throws herself upon a bed.*

BRACH. I have drunk Lethe.—Vittoria!
My dearest happiness! Vittoria!
What do you ail, my love? why do you weep?

VIT. Yes, I now weep poniards, do you see!

BRACH. Are not those matchless eyes mine?

VIT. I had rather
They were not matchless.

BRACH. Is not this lip mine?

VIT. Yes; thus to bite it off, rather than give it thee.

FLAM. Turn to my lord, good sister.

VIT. Hence, you pander!

FLAM. Pander! am I the author of your sin?

VIT. Yes; he's a base thief that a thief lets in.

FLAM. We're blown up, my lord.

BRACH. Wilt thou hear me?
Once to be jealous of thee, is to express
That I will love thee everlastingly,
And never more be jealous.

VIT. O thou fool,
Whose greatness hath by much o'ergrown thy wit!
What dar'st thou do that I not dare to suffer,
Excepting to be still thy whore? for that,
In the sea's bottom sooner thou shalt make
A bonfire.

FLAM. O, no oaths, for God's sake!

BRACH. Will you hear me?

VIT. Never.

FLAM. <What a damned imposthume is a woman's will!
Can nothing break it?—Fie, fie, my lord,
Women are caught as you take tortoises;
She must be turned on her back.>—Sister, by this hand,
I am on your side.—Come, come, you have wronged her:
What a strange credulous man were you, my lord,
To think the Duke of Florence would love her!
Will any mercer take another's ware
When once 'tis toused and sullied?—And yet, sister,
How scurvily this frowardness becomes you!
Young leverets stand not long; and women's anger
Should, like their flight, procure a little sport—
A full cry for a quarter of an hour,
And then be put to the dead quat.[6]

BRACH. Shall these eyes,
Which have so long time dwelt upon your face,
Be now put out?

FLAM. No cruel landlady i' th' world, which lends forth groats
To broom-men and takes use for them, would do't.—
<Hand her, my lord, and kiss her: be not like
A ferret, to let go your hold with blowing.>

BRACH. Let us renew right hands.

VIT. Hence!

[6] stop.

BRACH. Never shall rage
Or the forgetful wine make me commit
Like fault.
FLAM. <Now you are i' the way on't, follow't hard.>
BRACH. Be thou at peace with me, let all the world
Threaten the cannon.
FLAM. Mark his penitence:
Best natures do commit the grossest faults,
When they're given o'er to jealousy, as best wine,
Dying, makes strongest vinegar. I'll tell you:
The sea's more rough and raging than calm rivers,
But not so sweet nor wholesome. A quiet woman
Is a still water under a great bridge;
A man may shoot her safely.
VIT. Oh, ye dissembling men!—
FLAM. We sucked that, sister,
From women's breasts, in our first infancy.
VIT. To add misery to misery!
BRACH. Sweetest—
VIT. Am I not low enough?
Ay, ay, your good heart gathers like a snowball,
Now your affection's cold.
FLAM. Ud'sfoot, it shall melt
To a heart again, or all the wine in Rome
Shall run o' the lees for't.
VIT. Your dog or hawk should be rewarded better
Than I have been. I'll speak not one word more.
FLAM. Stop her mouth with a sweet kiss, my lord. [BRACHIANO *kisses her.*] So,
Now the tide's turned, the vessel's come about.
He's a sweet armful. Oh, we curled-haired men
Are still most kind to women! This is well.
BRACH. That you should chide thus!
FLAM. O, sir, your little chimneys
Do ever cast most smoke! I sweat for you.
Couple together with as deep a silence
As did the Grecians in their wooden horse.
My lord, supply your promises with deeds;
You know that painted meat no hunger feeds.
BRACH. Stay! ingrateful Rome—
FLAM. Rome! it deserves
To be called Barbary for our villainous usage.
BRACH. Soft! the same project which the Duke of Florence
(Whether in love or gullery I know not)
Laid down for her escape will I pursue.
FLAM. And no time fitter than this night, my lord,
The Pope being dead, and all the cardinals entered
The conclave for the electing a new Pope,
The city in a great confusiön.
We may attire her in a page's suit,
Lay[7] her post-horse, take shipping, and amain
For Padua.
BRACH. I'll instantly steal forth the Prince Giovanni,
And make for Padua. You two, with your old mother,
And young Marcello that attends on Florence,
If you can work him to it, follow me:
I will advance you all.—For you, Vittoria,
Think of a duchess' title.
FLAM. Lo you, sister!—
Stay, my lord; I'll tell you a tale: the crocodile, which lives in the river Nilus, hath a worm breeds i' the teeth of't, which puts it to extreme anguish: a little bird, no bigger than a wren, is barber-surgeon to this crocodile; flies into the jaws of't, picks out the worm, and brings present remedy. The fish, glad of ease, but ingrateful to her that did it, that the bird may not talk largely of her abroad for non-payment, closeth her chaps, intending to swallow her, and so put her to perpetual silence; but nature, loathing such ingratitude, hath armed this bird with a quill or prick on the top o' th' head, which[8] wounds the crocodile

[7] provide. [8] B, on the head, top o' th' which.

i' the mouth, forceth her open her bloody prison, and away flies the pretty tooth-picker from her cruel patient.

BRACH. Your application is, I have not rewarded
The service you have done me.
FLAM. No, my lord.—
You, sister, are the crocodile: you are [290
blemished in your fame, my lord cures it; and though the comparison hold not in every particle, yet observe, remember what good the bird with the prick i' the head hath done you, and scorn ingratitude.—
<It may appear to some ridiculous
Thus to talk knave and madman, and sometimes
Come in with a dried sentence, [300
stuffed with sage;
But this allows my varying of shapes:
Knaves do grow great by being great men's apes.>

SCENE III

LODOVICO *is guarding the approach to the Vatican, where the Cardinals are engaged in the election of the Pope.* FRANCISCO *enters, fussing with the importance of the occasion. He is accompanied by* GASPARO.

FRAN. So, my lord, I commend your diligence.
Guard well the conclave; and, as the order is, [10
Let none have conference with the cardinals.
LOD. I shall, my lord.—Room for the ambassadors!

The six AMBASSADORS *enter, garbed as Knights of various orders.*

GAS. They're wondrous brave[9] to-day: why do they wear
These several habits?
LOD. Oh, sir, they're knights [20
Of several orders: that lord i' the black cloak
With the silver cross is Knight of Rhodes; the next,
Knight of St. Michael; that, of the Golden Fleece;
The Frenchman, there, Knight of the Holy Ghost;
My lord of Savoy, Knight of the Annunciation; [30
The Englishman is Knight of the honored Garter,
Dedicated unto their saint, St. George. I could
Describe to you their several institutions,
With the laws annexed to their orders; but that time
Permits not such discovery.
FRAN. Where's Count Lodowick? [40
LOD. Here, my lord.
FRAN. 'Tis o' the point of dinner time:
Marshal the cardinals' service.
LOD. Sir, I shall.

Enter SERVANTS, *with several dishes covered.*

Stand, let me search your dish: who's this for?
SER. For my Lord Cardinal Monticelso. [50
LOD. Whose this?
SER. For my Lord Cardinal of Bourbon.
FRENCH AM. Why doth he search the dishes? to observe
What meat is dressed?
ENGLISH AM. No, sir, but to prevent
Lest any letters should be conveyed in,
To bribe or to solicit the advancement
Of any cardinal. When first they enter, [60
'Tis lawful for the ambassadors of princes
To enter with them, and to make their suit
For any man their prince affecteth best;
But after, till a general election,
No man may speak with them.
LOD. You that attend on the lord cardinals,
Open the window, and receive their viands! [70
AN OFFICER,[10] *appearing at the window.* You must return the service: the lord cardinals
Are busied 'bout electing of the Pope;
They have given o'er scrutiny, and are fall'n

[9] grand.

[10] B, "A Cardinal."

To adoratiön.[11]

LOD. Away, away! [*Exeunt* SERVANTS.

FRAN. I'll lay a thousand ducats you hear news

Of a Pope presently. [*A clamor of voices is heard.*] Hark! sure, he's elected:

Behold, my Lord of Arragon appears

On the church battlements.

ARR., *appearing on the church battlements. Denuntio vobis gaudium magnum. Reverendissimus cardinalis Lorenzo de Monticelso electus est in sedem apostolicam, et elegit sibi nomen Paulum Quartum.*

OMNES. *Vivat sanctus pater Paulus Quartus!*

Enter FRANCISCO'S SERVANT.

SER. Vittoria, my lord,—

FRAN. Well, what of her?

SER. Is fled the city,—

FRAN. Ha!

SER. With Duke Brachiano.

FRAN. Fled? Where's the Prince Giovanni?

SER. Gone with his father.

FRAN. Let the matrona of the convertites

Be apprehended.—Fled! Oh, damnable! [*Exit* SERVANT.

<How fortunate are my wishes! why, 'twas this

I only labored: I did send the letter

To instruct him what to do. Thy fame, fond[12] duke,

I first have poisoned; directed thee the way

To marry a whore: what can be worse? This follows:

The hand must act to drown the passionate tongue;

I scorn to wear a sword and prate of wrong.

MONTICELSO *comes forth from the Vatican in state, followed by a train of Cardinals.*

MONT. *Concedimus vobis apostolicam benedictionem et remissionem peccatorum.* [FRANCISCO *whispers to him.*

My lord reports Vittoria Corombona

Is stol'n from forth the house of convertites

By Brachiano, and they're fled the city.

Now, though this be the first day of our state,

We cannot better please the divine power

Than to sequester from the holy Church

These cursëd persons. Make it therefore known,

We do denounce excommunication

Against them both: all that are theirs in Rome

We likewise banish. Set on. [*Exeunt* MONTICELSO, *his train,* AMBASSADORS, *&c.*

FRAN. Come, dear Lodovico;

You have ta'en the sacrament to prosecute

The intended murder.

LOD. With all constancy.

But, sir, I wonder you'll engage yourself

In person, being a great prince.

FRAN. Divert me not:

Most of his court are of my factiön,

And some are of my council. Noble friend,

Our danger shall be like in this design:

Give leave part of the glory may be mine. [*Exeunt* FRANCISCO *and* GASPARO.

Re-enter MONTICELSO.

MONT. Why did the Duke of Florence with such care

Labor your pardon? say.

LOD. Italian beggars will resolve you that,

Who, begging of an alms, bid those they beg of

Do good for their own sakes; or, may be,

He spreads his bounty with a sowing hand,

Like kings, who many times give out of measure,

Not for desert so much as for their pleasure.

MONT. I know you're cunning. Come, what devil was that

That you were raising?

[11] Professor Sampson's suggestion. B, admiration. [12] foolish.

LOD. Devil, my lord?
MONT. I ask you
How doth the duke employ you, that his bonnet
Fell with such compliment unto his knee
When he departed from you?
LOD. Why, my lord,
He told me of a resty Barbary horse
Which he would fain have brought to the career,
The sault, and the ring-galliard; now, my lord,
I have a rare French rider.[13]
MONT. Take you heed
Lest the jade break your neck. Do you put me off
With your wild horse-tricks? Sirrah, you do lie.
Oh, thou'rt a foul black cloud, and thou dost threat
A violent storm!
LOD. Storms are i' the air, my lord:
I am too low to storm.
MONT. Wretched creature!
I know that thou are fashioned for all ill;
Like dogs that once get blood, they'll ever kill.
About some murder? was't not?
LOD. I'll not tell you;
And yet I care not greatly if I do;
Marry, with this preparation: holy father,
I come not to you as an intelligencer,
But as a penitent sinner: what I utter
Is in confession merely; which you know
must never be revealed.
MONT. You have o'erta'en me.
LOD. Sir, I did love Brachiano's duchess dearly,
Or rather I pursued her with hot lust,
Though she ne'er knew on't. She was poisoned;
Upon my soul, she was; for which I have sworn
To avenge her murder.
MONT. To the Duke of Florence?
LOD. To him I have.
MONT. Miserable creature!
If thou persist in this, 'tis damnable.
Dost thou imagine thou canst slide on blood,
And not be tainted with a shameful fall?
Or, like the black and melancholic yew-tree,
Dost think to root thyself in dead men's graves,
And yet to prosper? Instructiön to thee
Comes like sweet showers to over-hardened ground;
They wet, but pierce not deep. And so I leave thee,
With all the Furies hanging 'bout thy neck,
Till by thy penitence thou remove this evil,
In conjuring from thy breast that cruel devil. [*Exit.*
LOD. I'll give it o'er; he says 'tis damnable;
Besides I did expect his suffrage,
By reason of Camillo's death.

Re-enter FRANCISCO, *with a* SERVANT.

FRAN. Do you know that count?
SER. Yes, my lord.
FRAN. Bear him these thousand ducats to his lodging;
Tell him the Pope hath sent them.—<Happily[14]
That will confirm [him] more than all the rest.> [*Exit.*
SER. Sir,—
LOD. To me, sir?
SER. His Holiness hath sent you
A thousand crowns, and wills you, if you travel,
To make him your patron for intelligence.
LOD. His creature ever to be commanded. [*Exit* SERVANT.
Why, now 'tis come about. He railed upon me,
And yet these crowns were told out and laid ready
Before he knew my voyage. O the art,
The modest form of greatness! that do sit,
Like brides at wedding-dinners, with their looks turned

[13] saddle-horse.

[14] Haply.

From the least wanton jest, their puling stomach
Sick of the modesty, when their thoughts are loose,
Even acting of those hot and lustful sports
Are to ensue about midnight: such his cunning:
He sounds my depth thus with a golden plummet.
I am doubly armed now. Now to the act of blood.
There's but three Furies found in spacious hell,
But in a great man's breast three thousand dwell. [*Exit.*

ACT FIVE

Scene I

Brachiano *and* Vittoria *have just been married. Attended by* Flamineo, Marcello, Hortensio, Cornelia, Zanche, *and others, they pass through a hall in* Brachiano's *palace in Padua.*

A moment or two later, Flamineo *and* Hortensio *return.*

Flam. In all the weary minutes of my life,
Day ne'er broke up till now. This marriäge
Confirms me happy.
Hort. 'Tis a good assurance.
Saw you not yet the Moor that's come to court?
Flam. Yes, and conferred with him i' the duke's closet:
I have not seen a goodlier personage,
Nor ever talked with man better experienced
In state affairs or rudiments of war.
He hath, by report, served the Venetiän
In Candy these twice seven years, and been chief
In many a bold design.
Hort. What are those two
That bear him company?
Flam. Two noblemen of Hungary, that, living in the emperor's service as commanders, eight years since, contrary to the expectation of all the court, entered into religion, into the strict order of Capuchins: but, being not well settled in their undertaking, they left their order, and returned to court; for which, being after troubled in conscience, they vowed their service against the enemies of Christ, went to Malta, were there knighted, and in their return back, at this great solemnity, they are resolved for ever to forsake the world, and settle themselves here in a house of Capuchins in Padua.
Hort. 'Tis strange.
Flam. One thing makes it so: they have vowed for ever to wear, next their bare bodies, those coats of mail they served in.
Hort. Hard penance! Is the Moor a Christiän?
Flam. He is.
Hort. Why proffers he his service to our duke?
Flam. Because he understands there's like to grow
Some wars between us and the Duke of Florence,
In which he hopes employment.
I never saw one in a stern bold look
Wear more command, nor in a lofty phrase
Express more knowing or more deep contempt
Of our slight airy courtiërs. He talks
As if he had travelled all the princes' courts
Of Christendom; in all things strives to express,
That all that should dispute with him may know
Glories, like glow-worms, afar off shine bright,
But, looked to near, have neither heat nor light.[1]—
The duke!

Brachiano *re-enters, accompanied by* Francisco *(disguised as* Mulinassar, *a Moor),* Lodovico *and* Gasparo *(disguised as Knights of Malta), and* Carlo, Pedro, Antonelli, *and* Farnese, *bearing their swords and helmets.*

[1] These two lines are repeated in "The Duchess of Malfi."

BRACH. You are nobly welcome. We have heard at full
Your honorable service 'gainst the Turk.
To you, brave Mulinassar, we assign
A competent pension, and are inly sorry
The vows of those two worthy gentlemen
Make them incapable of our proffered bounty.
Your wish is you may leave your warlike swords
For monuments in our chapel: I accept it
As a great honor done me, and must crave
Your leave to furnish out our duchess' revels.
Only one thing, as the last vanity
You e'er shall view, deny me not to stay
To see a barriers prepared to-night:
You shall have private standings. It hath pleased
The great ambassadors of several princes,
In their return from Rome to their own countries,
To grace our marriage, and to honor me
With such a kind of sport.
FRAN. I shall persuade them
To stay, my lord.
BRACH.[2] Set on there to the presence![3]
[*Exeunt* BRACHIANO, FLAMINEO, *and* HORTENSIO.][4]
CARL. Noble my lord, most fortunately welcome. [*The Conspirators here embrace.*
You have our vows, sealed with the sacrament,
To second your attempts.
PED. And all things ready:
He could not have invented his own ruin
(Had he despaired) with more propriety.
LOD. You would not take my way.
FRAN. 'Tis better ordered.
LOD. T'have poisoned his prayer-book, or a pair[5] of beads,
The pummel of his saddle, his looking-glass,
Or th' handle of his racket—Oh, that, that!
That while he had been bandying at tennis,
He might have sworn himself to hell, and struck
His soul into the hazard! Oh, my lord,
I would have our plot be ingenious,
And have it hereafter recorded for example
Rather than borrow example.
FRAN. There's no way
More speeding than this thought on.
LOD. On, then.
FRAN. And yet methinks that this revenge is poor,
Because it steals upon him like a thief.
To have ta'en him by the casque in a pitched field,
Led him to Florence!—
LOD. It had been rare: and there
Have crowned him with a wreath of stinking garlic,
T' have shown the sharpness of his government
And rankness of his lust.—Flamineo comes. [*Exeunt all but* FRANCISCO.

Re-enter FLAMINEO, *with* MARCELLO *and* ZANCHE.

MAR. <Why doth this devil haunt you, say?
FLAM. I know not;
For, by this light, I do not conjure for her.
'Tis not so great a cunning as men think
To raise the devil; for here's one up already:
The greatest cunning were to lay him down.
MAR. She is your shame.
FLAM. I prithee, pardon her.
In faith, you see, women are like to burrs:
Where their affection throws them, there they'll stick.>
ZAN. That is my countryman, a goodly person:
When he's at leisure, I'll discourse with him
In our own language.
FLAM. I beseech you do. [*Exit* ZANCHE.
How is't, brave soldier? Oh, that I had seen

[2] Qq give this speech to Francisco.
[3] the presence-chamber.
[4] Qq add Marcello, who has not been marked as having entered.
[5] string.

Some of your iron days! I pray, relate Some of your service to us.

FRAN. 'Tis a ridiculous thing for a man to be his own chronicle: I did never wash my mouth with mine own praise for fear of getting a stinking breath.

MAR. You're too stoical. The duke will expect other discourse from you.

FRAN. I shall never flatter him: I have studied man too much to do that. [190 What difference is between the duke and I? no more than between two bricks, all made of one clay; only't may be one is placed on the top of a turret, the other in the bottom of a well, by mere chance. If I were placed as high as the duke, I should stick as fast, make as fair a show, and bear out weather equally.

FLAM. <If this soldier had a patent to beg in churches, then he would tell [200 them stories.>

MAR. I have been a soldier too.

FRAN. How have you thrived?

MAR. Faith, poorly.

FRAN. That's the misery of peace: only outsides are then respected. As ships seem very great upon the river, which show very little upon the seas, so some men i' the court seem colossuses in a chamber, who, if they came into the [210 field, would appear pitiful pigmies.

FLAM. Give me a fair room yet hung with arras, and some great cardinal to lug me by the ears as his endeared minion.

FRAN. And thou mayst do the devil knows what villainy.

FLAM. And safely.

FRAN. Right: you shall see in the country, in harvest-time, pigeons, though [220 they destroy never so much corn, the farmer dare not present the fowling-piece to them: why? because they belong to the lord of the manor; whilst your poor sparrows, that belong to the Lord of Heaven, they go to the pot for't.

FLAM. I will now give you some politic instructions. The duke says he will give you a pension: that's but bare promise; get it under his hand; for I have known [230 men that have come from serving against the Turk, for three or four months they have had pension to buy them new wooden legs and fresh plasters; but, after, 'twas not to be had; and this miserable courtesy shows as if a tormentor should give hot cordial drinks to one three-quarters dead o' the rack, only to fetch the miserable soul again to endure more dog-days. [*Exit* FRANCISCO. [240

Re-enter HORTENSIO *and* ZANCHE, *with a* YOUNG LORD *and two more.*

How now, gallants! what, are they ready for the barriers?

YOUNG LORD. Yes; the lords are putting on their armor.

HORT. <What's he?

FLAM. A new upstart; one that swears like a falconer, and will lie in the duke's ear day by day, like a maker of al- [250 manacs: and yet I knew him, since he came to the court, smell worse of sweat than an under tennis-court-keeper.

HORT. Look, you, yonder's your sweet mistress.

FLAM. Thou art my sworn brother: I'll tell thee, I do love that Moor, that witch, very constrainedly. She knows some of my villainy. I do love her just as a man holds a wolf by the ears: but, [260 for fear of turning upon me and pulling out my throat, I would let her go to the devil.

HORT. I hear she claims marriage of thee.

FLAM. Faith, I made to her some such dark promise; and, in seeking to fly from't, I run on, like a frighted dog with a bottle at's tail, that fain would bite it off, and yet dares not look behind [270 him.> —Now, my precious gipsy.

ZAN. Ay, your love to me rather cools than heats.

FLAM. Marry, I am the sounder lover: we have many wenches about the town heat too fast.

HORT. What do you think of these perfumed gallants, then?

FLAM. Their satin cannot save them: I am confident [280 They have a certain spice of the disease;

For they that sleep with dogs shall rise with fleas.

ZAN. Believe it! A little painting and gay clothes
Make you loathe me.

FLAM. How? love a lady for painting or gay apparel? I'll unkennel one example more for thee: Aesop had a foolish dog that let go the flesh to catch the [290 shadow: I would have courtiers be better divers.

ZAN. You remember your oaths?

FLAM. Lovers' oaths are like mariners' prayers, uttered in extremity; but, when the tempest is o'er and that the vessel leaves tumbling, they fall from protesting to drinking. And yet, amongst gentlemen, protesting and drinking go together, and agree as well as shoemakers and [300 Westphalia bacon. They are both drawers on; for drink draws on protestation and protestation draws on more drink. Is not this discourse better now than the morality of your sunburnt gentleman?

Re-enter CORNELIA.

CORN. Is this your perch, you haggard? fly to the stews. [*Striking* ZANCHE. [310

FLAM. You should be clapped by the heels now: strike i' the court! [*Exit* CORNELIA.

ZAN. She's good for nothing but to make her maids
Catch cold a-nights: they dare not use a bed-staff
For fear of her light fingers.

MAR., *kicking* ZANCHE. You're a strumpet, [320
An impudent one.

FLAM. Why do you kick her? say;
Do you think that she's like a walnut-tree?
Must she be cudgelled ere she bear good fruit?

MAR. She brags that you shall marry her.

FLAM. What then?

MAR. I had rather she were pitched [330 upon a stake
In some new-seeded garden, to affright
Her fellow crows thence.

FLAM. You're a boy, a fool:
Be guardian to your hound; I am of age.

MAR. If I take her near you, I'll cut her throat.

FLAM. With a fan of feathers?

MAR. And, for you, I'll whip
This folly from you. [340

FLAM. Are you choleric?
I'll purge't with rhubarb. [*Threatens to strike him.*

HORT. Oh! your brother!

FLAM. Hang him!
He wrongs me most that ought to offend me least.—
I do suspect my mother played foul play
When she conceived thee. [349

MAR. Now, by all my hopes,
Like the two slaughtered sons of Œdipus,
The very flames of our affectiön
Shall turn two ways. Those words I'll make thee answer
With thy heart-blood.

FLAM. Do, like the geese in the progress:
You know where you shall find me.

MAR. Very good. [*Exit* FLAMINEO.
An thou be'st a noble friend, bear [360 him my sword,
And bid him fit the length on't.

YOUNG LORD. Sir, I shall.

[*Exeunt all but* ZANCHE.

ZAN. He comes. Hence petty thought of my disgrace!

Re-enter FRANCISCO.

I ne'er loved my complexiön till now,
'Cause I may boldly say, without a blush,
I love you. [370

FRAN. Your love is untimely sown; there's a spring at Michaelmas, but 'tis but a faint one: I am sunk in years; and I have vowed never to marry.

ZAN. Alas! poor maids get more lovers than husbands. Yet you may mistake my wealth; for, as when ambassadors are sent to congratulate princes, there's commonly sent along with them a rich present, so that, though the prince like not [380 the ambassador's person nor words, yet

he likes well of the presentment; so I may come to you in the same manner, and be better loved for my dowry than my virtue.

FRAN. I'll think on the motion.

ZAN. Do: I'll now detain you no longer. At your better leisure I'll tell you things shall startle your blood:
Nor blame me that this passion I re- [390
veal;
Lovers die inward that their flames conceal. [*Exit.*

FRAN. Of all intelligence this may prove the best:
Sure, I shall draw strange fowl from this foul nest.

SCENE II

In a room in the palace CORNELIA *finds* MARCELLO, *whom she has been anxiously looking for, having heard that he is to fight a duel.*

CORN. I hear a whispering all about the court
You are to fight: who is your opposite? What is the quarrel?

MAR. 'Tis an idle rumor.

CORN. Will you dissemble? sure, you [10
do not well
To fright me thus: you never look thus pale,
But when you are most angry. I do charge you
Upon my blessing—nay, I'll call the duke, And he shall school you.

MAR. Publish not a fear
Which would convert to laughter: 'tis not so. [20
Was not this crucifix my father's?

CORN. Yes.

MAR. I have heard you say, giving my brother suck,
He took the crucifix between his hands, And broke a limb off.

CORN. Yes; but 'tis mended.

Enter FLAMINEO.

FLAM. I have brought your weapon [29
back. [*Runs* MARCELLO *through.*

CORN. Ha! Oh, my horror!

MAR. You have brought it home, indeed.

CORN. Help! Oh, he's murdered!

FLAM. Do you turn your gall up? I'll to sanctuary,
And send a surgeon to you. [*Exit.*

HORTENSIO, CARLO, *and* PEDRO *enter.*

HORT. How? o' th' ground?

MAR. O mother, now remember [40
what I told
Of breaking of the crucifix! Farewell.
There are some sins which Heaven doth duly punish
In a whole family. This it is to rise
By all dishonest means! Let all men know,
That tree shall long time keep a steady foot
Whose branches spread no wider than [50
the root. [*Dies.*

CORN. O, my perpetual sorrow!

HORT. Virtuous Marcello!
He's dead.—Pray, leave him, lady.—Come, you shall.

CORN. Alas! he is not dead; he's in a trance. Why, here's nobody shall get anything by his death. Let me call him again, for God's sake!

CARL. I would you were deceived. [60

CORN. Oh, you abuse me, you abuse me, you abuse me! How many have gone away thus, for lack of tendance! Rear up's head, rear up's head: his bleeding inward will kill him.

HORT. You see he is departed.

CORN. Let me come to him; give me him as he is: if he be turned to earth, let me but give him one hearty kiss, and you shall put us both into one coffin. Fetch [70
a looking-glass: see if his breath will not stain it: or pull out some feathers from my pillow, and lay them to his lips. Will you lose him for a little painstaking?

HORT. Your kindest office is to pray for him.

CORN. Alas! I would not pray for him yet. He may live to lay me i' the ground, and pray for me, if you'll let me come to him. [80

Enter BRACHIANO, *all armed save the beaver, with* FLAMINEO, FRANCISCO, LODOVICO, *and Page carrying the beaver.*

BRACH. Was this your handiwork?
FLAM. It was my misfortune.
CORN. He lies, he lies; he did not kill him: these have killed him that would not let him be better looked to.
BRACH. Have comfort, my grieved mother. [90
CORN. Oh, you screech-owl!
HORT. Forbear, good madam.
CORN. Let me go, let me go. [*She runs to* FLAMINEO *with her knife drawn, and, coming to him, lets it fall.*
The God of Heaven forgive thee! Dost not wonder
I pray for thee? I'll tell thee what's the reason:
I have scarce breath to number twenty minutes; [101
I'd not spend that in cursing. Fare thee well:
Half of thyself lies there; and mayst thou live
To fill an hour-glass with his mouldered ashes,
To tell how thou shouldst spend the time to come
In blest repentance! [110
BRACH. Mother, pray tell me[6]
How came he by his death? what was the quarrel?
CORN. Indeed, my younger boy presumed too much
Upon his manhood, gave him bitter words,
Drew his sword first; and so, I know not how,
For I was out of my wits, he fell with's head [121
Just in my bosom.
PAGE. This is not true, madam.
CORN. I pray thee, peace.
One arrow's grassed[7] already: it were vain
T' lose this for that will ne'er be found again.

[6] The verse seems to require "Pray you tell me."
[7] lost in the grass. B, grazed.

BRACH. Go, bear the body to Cornelia's lodging: [130
And we command that none acquaint our duchess
With this sad accident. For you, Flamineo,
Hark you, I will not grant your pardon.
FLAM. No?
BRACH. Only a lease of your life; and that shall last
But for one day: thou shalt be forced each evening [140
To renew it, or be hanged.
FLAM. At your pleasure.
[LODOVICO *sprinkles* BRACHIANO'S *beaver with a poison.*]
Your will is law now, I'll not meddle with it.
BRACH. You once did brave me in your sister's lodging;
I'll now keep you in awe for't.—Where's our beaver? [150
FRAN. <He calls for his destruction. —Noble youth,
I pity thy sad fate!—Now to the barriers.
This shall his passage to the black lake further;
The last good deed he did, he pardoned murther.> [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

We see the lists at Padua. Charges and shouts. Men fight at barriers; first single pairs, then three to three.

Enter BRACHIANO, VITTORIA, GIOVANNI, FRANCISCO, *and* FLAMINEO, *with others.*

BRACH. An armorer! ud's death, an armorer!
FLAM. Armorer! where's the armorer?
BRACH. Tear off my beaver.
FLAM. Are you hurt, my lord? [10

Enter ARMORER.

BRACH. Oh, my brain's on fire! the helmet is poisoned.
ARM. My lord,
Upon my soul—
BRACH. Away with him to torture!
There are some great ones that have hand in this,
And near about me.

Enter VITTORIA.

VIT. Oh, my loved lord! poisoned?
FLAM. Remove the bar. Here's unfortunate revels!
Call the physicians.

Enter two PHYSICIANS.

A plague upon you!
We have too much of your cunning here already:
I fear the ambassadors are likewise poisoned.
BRACH. Oh, I am gone already! the infection
Flies to the brain and heart. O thou strong heart!
There's such a covenant 'tween the world and it,
They're loth to break.

Enter GIOVANNI.

GIO. O my most loved father!
BRACH. Remove the boy away.—
Where's this good woman?—Had I infinite worlds,
They were too little for thee: must I leave thee?—
What say you, screech-owls, is the venom mortal?
1 PHY. Most deadly.
BRACH. Most corrupted politic hangman,
You kill without book; but your art to save
Fails you as oft as great men's needy friends.
I that have given life to offending slaves
And wretched murderers, have I not power
To lengthen mine own a twelvemonth?—
[*To* VITTORIA.] Do not kiss me, for I shall poison thee.
This unction's sent from the great Duke of Florence.
FRAN. Sir, be of comfort.
BRACH. O thou soft natural death, that art joint-twin
To sweetest slumber! no rough-bearded comet
Stares on thy mild departure; the dull owl
Beats not against thy casement; the hoarse wolf
Scents not thy carrion: pity winds thy corse,
Whilst horror waits on princes.
VIT. I am lost for ever.
BRACH. How miserable a thing it is to die
'Mongst women howling!

Enter LODOVICO *and* GASPARO, *in the habit of Capuchins.*

What are those?
FLAM. Franciscans:
They have brought the extreme unction.
BRACH. On pain of death, let no man name death to me:
It is a word infinitely terrible.
Withdraw into our cabinet. [*Exeunt all but* FRANCISCO *and* FLAMINEO, BRACHIANO *being carried out.*
FLAM. To see what solitariness is about dying princes! as heretofore they have unpeopled towns, divorced friends, and made great houses unhospitable, so now, O justice! where are their flatterers now? Flatterers are but the shadows of princes' bodies; the least thick cloud makes them invisible.
FRAN. There's great moan made for him.
FLAM. Faith, for some few hours salt water will run most plentifully in every office o' the court; but, believe it, most of them do but weep as over their stepmothers' graves.
FRAN. How mean you?
FLAM. Why, they dissemble; as some men do that live within compass o' the verge.
FRAN. Come, you have thrived well under him.
FLAM. Faith, like a wolf in a woman's breast; I have been fed with poultry; but, for money, understand me, I had as good a will to cozen him as e'er an officer of them all; but I had not cunning enough to do it.
FRAN. What didst thou think of him? faith, speak freely.
FLAM. He was a kind of statesman that

would sooner have reckoned how many cannon-bullets he had discharged [120
against a town, to count his expense that way, than how many of his valiant and deserving subjects he lost before it.

FRAN. Oh, speak well of the duke.

FLAM. I have done. Wilt hear some of my court-wisdom? To reprehend princes is dangerous; and to over-commend some of them is palpable lying.

Re-enter LODOVICO, *still as a Capuchin.*

FRAN. How is it with the duke? [130

LOD. Most deadly ill.
He's fall'n into a strange distractiön:
He talks of battle and monopolies,
Levying of taxes; and from that descends
To the most brain-sick language. His mind fastens
On twenty several objects, which confound
Deep sense with folly. Such a fearful end [140
May teach some men that bear too lofty crest,
Though they live happiest, yet they die not best.
He hath conferred the whole state of the dukedom
Upon your sister, till the prince arrive
At mature age.

FLAM. There's some good luck in that yet. [150

FRAN. See, here he comes.

BRACHIANO *is brought in in a bed, accompanied by* VITTORIA, GASPARO *(as a Capuchin), and others. The scene is supposed to change to the* DUKE'S *bed-chamber.*

There's death in's face already.

VIT. O my good lord!

BRACH.[8] Away! you have abused me:
You have conveyed coin forth our territories, [161
Bought and sold offices, oppressed the poor,
And I ne'er dreamt on't. Make up your accounts:
I'll now be mine own steward.

FLAM. Sir, have patience.

BRACH. Indeed, I am to blame:
For did you ever hear the dusky raven
Chide blackness? or was't ever known the devil [171
Railed against cloven creatures?

VIT. O my lord!

BRACH. Let me have some quails to supper.

FLAM. Sir, you shall.

BRACH. No, some fried dog-fish; your quails feed on poison.
That old dog-fox, that politician, Florence! [180
I'll forswear hunting, and turn dog-killer:
Rare! I'll be friends with him; for, mark you, sir,
One dog still sets another a-barking. Peace,
Peace! yonder's a fine slave come in now.

FLAM. Where?

BRACH. Why, there, in a blue bonnet, and a pair
Of breeches with a great cod-piece: ha, ha, ha! [191
Look you, his cod-piece is stuck full of pins,
With pearls o' the head of them. Do not you know him?

FLAM. No, my lord.

BRACH. Why, 'tis the devil;
I know him by a great rose[9] he wears on's shoe,
To hide his cloven foot. I'll dispute with him; [201
He's a rare linguist.

VIT. My lord, here's nothing.

BRACH. Nothing? rare! nothing! when I want money,
Our treasury is empty, there is nothing:
I'll not be used thus.

VIT. Oh, lie still, my lord!

BRACH. See, see Flamineo, that killed his brother, [210
Is dancing on the ropes there, and he carries
A money-bag in each hand, to keep him even,
For fear of breaking's neck. And there's a lawyer

[8] The stage direction here says: "These speeches are several kinds of distractions, and in the action should appear so."

[9] rosette.

In a gown whipped with velvet, stares and gapes
When the money will fall. How the rogue cuts capers! [220
It should have been in a halter. 'Tis there: what's she?
FLAM. Vittoria, my lord.
BRACH. Ha, ha, ha! her hair
Is sprinkled with arras-powder, that makes her look
As if she had sinned in the pastry.—What's he?
FLAM. A divine, my lord. [229
[BRACHIANO *seems here near his end:* LODOVICO *and* GASPARO *present him with a crucifix and hallowed candle.*
BRACH. He will be drunk; avoid him:
Th' argument is fearful, when churchmen stagger in't.
Look you, six grey rats, that have lost their tails,
Crawl up the pillow: send for a rat-catcher:
I'll do a miracle; I'll free the court [240
From all foul vermin. Where's Flamineo?
FLAM. <I do not like that he names me so often,
Especially on's death-bed: 'tis a sign
I shall not live long.> See, he's near his end.
LOD. Pray, give us leave.—*Attende, domine Brachiane.*
FLAM. See, see how firmly he doth fix his eye [250
Upon the crucifix.
VIT. Oh, hold it constant!
It settles his wild spirits; and so his eyes
Melt into tears.
LOD. *Domine Brachiane, solebas in bello tutus esse tuo clypeo; nunc hunc clypeum hosti tuo opponas infernali.* [By the crucifix. [259
GAS. *Olim hasta valuisti in bello; nunc hanc sacram hastam vibrabis contra hostem animarum.* [By the hallowed taper.
LOD. *Attende, domine Brachiane; si nunc quoque probas ea quae acta sunt inter nos, flecte caput in dextrum.*
GAS. *Esto securus, domine Brachiane; cogita quantum habeas meritorum; denique mentineris meam animam pro tua oppignoratam si quid esset periculi.* [269
LOD. *Si nunc quoque probas ea quae acta sunt inter nos, flecte caput in laevum.*—
He is departing: pray, stand all apart,
And let us only whisper in his ears
Some private meditations, which our order
Permits you not to hear. [*Here, the rest being departed,* LODOVICO *and* GASPARO *discover themselves.*
GAS. Brachiano,— [280
LOD. Devil
Brachiano, thou art damned.
GAS. Perpetually.
LOD. A slave condemned and given up to the gallows
Is thy great lord and master.
GAS. True; for thou
Art given up to the devil.
LOD. O you slave! [289
You that were held the famous politician,
Whose art was poison—
GAS. And whose conscience, murder!
LOD. That would have broke your wife's neck down the stairs,
Ere she was poisoned!
GAS. That had your villainous salads—
LOD. And fine embroidered bottles and perfumes, [300
Equally mortal with a winter-plague!
GAS. Now there's mercury—
LOD. And copperas—
GAS. And quicksilver—
LOD. With other devilish pothecary stuff,
A-melting in your politic brains: dost hear?
GAS. This is Count Lodovico.
LOD. This, Gasparo; [310
And thou shalt die like a poor rogue.
GAS. And stink
Like a dead fly-blown dog.
LOD. And be forgotten
Before thy funeral sermon.
BRACH., *calling.* Vittoria! Vittoria!
LOD. Oh, the cursëd devil
Comes to himself again! we are undone,

GAS. Strangle him in private. [319

VITTORIA *comes running in, followed by Attendants.*

What, will you call him again
To live in treble torments? for charity,
For Christian charity, avoid the chamber. [*Exeunt* VITTORIA *and Attendants.*

LOD. You would prate, sir? This is a true-love-knot
Sent from the Duke of Florence. [329

[BRACHIANO *is strangled.*

GAS. What, is it done?

LOD. The snuff is out. No woman keeper[10] i' th' world,
Though she had practised seven year at the pest-house,
Could have done't quaintlier. [*To those within.*] My lords, he's dead.

Re-enter VITTORIA, FRANCISCO, FLAMINEO, *and Attendants.*

OMNES. Rest to his soul! [340

VIT. O me! this place is hell. [*Exit.*

FRAN. How heavily she takes it!

FLAM. Oh, yes, yes;
Had women navigable rivers in their eyes,
They would dispend them all: surely, I wonder
Why we should wish more rivers to the city,
When they sell water so good cheap. I'll tell thee, [350
These are but moonish shades of griefs or fears;
There's nothing sooner dry than women's tears.
Why, here's an end of all my harvest; he has given me nothing.
Court-promises! let wise men count them cursed,
For while you live, he that scores best pays worst. [360

FRAN. Sure, this was Florence' doing.

FLAM. Very likely.
Those are found weighty strokes which come from th' hand,
But those are killing strokes which come from th' head.
Oh, the rare tricks of a Machiavellian!
He doth not come, like a gross plodding slave,
And buffet you to death: no, my quaint knave, [371
He tickles you to death, makes you die laughing,
As if you had swallowed down a pound of saffron.
You see the feat, 'tis practised in a trice;
To teach court honesty, it jumps on ice.

FRAN. Now have the people liberty to talk,
And descant on his vices. [380

FLAM. Misery of princes,
That must of force be censured by their slaves!
Not only blamed for doing things are ill,
But for not doing all that all men will:
One were better be a thresher.—Ud's death,
I would fain speak with this duke yet.

FRAN. Now he's dead?

FLAM. I cannot conjure; but, if prayers or oaths [391
Will get to the speech of him, though forty devils
Wait on him in his livery of flames,
I'll speak to him, and shake him by the hand,
Though I be blasted. [*Exit.*

FRAN. Excellent Lodovico!
What, did you terrify him at the last gasp? [400

LOD. Yes, and so idly, that the duke had like
To have terrified us.

FRAN. How?

LOD. You shall hear that hereafter.

Enter ZANCHE.

<See, yon's the infernal that would make up sport.
Now to the revelation of that secret
She promised when she fell in love with you.> [411

FRAN. You're passionately met in this sad world.

ZAN. I would have you look up, sir; these court-tears
Claim not your tribute to them: let those weep

[10] nurse.

That guiltily partake in the sad cause.
I knew last night, by a sad dream I had,
Some mischief would ensue; yet, to say truth,
My dream most concerned you.
LOD., *to* FRANCISCO. <Shall's fall a-dreaming?
FRAN. Yes; and for fashion sake I'll dream with her.>
ZAN. Methought, sir, you came stealing to my bed.
FRAN. Wilt thou believe me, sweeting? by this light,
I was a-dreamt on thee too; for methought
I saw thee naked.
ZAN. Fie, sir! As I told you,
Methought you lay down by me.
FRAN. So dreamt I;
And, lest thou shouldst take cold, I covered thee
With this Irish mantle.
ZAN. Verily, I did dream
You were somewhat bold with me: but, to come to't—
LOD. How, how! I hope you will not go to't here.
FRAN. Nay, you must hear my dream out.
ZAN. Well, sir, forth!
FRAN. When I threw the mantle o'er thee, thou didst laugh
Exceedingly, methought.
ZAN. Laugh?
FRAN. And cried'st out,
The hair did tickle thee.
ZAN. There was a dream indeed!
LOD. <Mark her, I prithee; she simpers like the suds
A collier hath been washed in.>
ZAN. Come, sir, good fortune tends you. I did tell you
I would reveal a secret: Isabella,
The Duke of Florence' sister, was impoisoned
By a fumed picture; and Camillo's neck
Was broke by damned Flamineo, the mischance
Laid on a vaulting-horse.
FRAN. Most strange!
ZAN. Most true.
LOD. <The bed of snakes is broke.>
ZAN. I sadly do confess I had a hand
In the black deed.
FRAN. Thou kept'st their counsel?
ZAN. Right;
For which, urged with contrition, I intend
This night to rob Vittoria.
LOD. <Excellent penitence!
Usurers dream on't while they sleep out sermons.>
ZAN. To further our escape, I have entreated
Leave to retire me, till the funeral,
Unto a friend i' the country: that excuse
Will further our escape. In coin and jewels
I shall at least make good unto your use
An hundred thousand crowns.
FRAN. O noble wench!
LOD. Those crowns we'll share.
ZAN. It is a dowry,
Methinks, should make that sun-burnt proverb false,
And wash the Æthiop white.
FRAN. It shall. Away!
ZAN. Be ready for our flight.
FRAN. An hour 'fore day. [*Exit* ZANCHE.
O strange discovery! why, till now we knew not
The circumstance of either of their deaths.

Re-enter ZANCHE.

ZAN. You'll wait about midnight in the chapel?
FRAN. There. [*Exit* ZANCHE.
LOD. Why, now our action's justified.
FRAN. Tush for justice!
What harms it justice? we now, like the partridge,
Purge the disease with laurel; for the fame
Shall crown the enterprise and quit the shame.

SCENE IV

Another room in the palace.

Enter FLAMINEO *and* GASPARO, *at one door; by another,* GIOVANNI, *attended.*

GAS. <The young duke: did you e'er see a sweeter prince?

FLAM. I have known a poor woman's bastard better favored. This is behind him. Now to his face: all comparisons were hateful. Wise was the courtly [10 peacock that, being a great minion, and, being compared for beauty by some dottrels[11] that stood by to the kingly eagle, said the eagle was a far fairer bird than herself, not in respect of her feathers, but in respect of her long talons: his will grow out in time.> My gracious lord!

GIO. I pray, leave me, sir.

FLAM. Your grace must be merry: 'tis I have cause to mourn; for, wot you, [20 what said the little boy that rode behind his father on horseback?

GIO. Why, what said he?

FLAM. "When you are dead, father," said he, "I hope I then shall ride in the saddle." Oh, 'tis a brave thing for a man to sit by himself! he may stretch himself in the stirrups, look about, and see the whole compass of the hemisphere. You're now, my lord, i' th' saddle. [30

GIO. Study your prayers, sir, and be penitent:
'Twere fit you'd think on what hath former bin;
I have heard grief named the eldest child of sin. [*Exit.*

FLAM. Study my prayers! he threatens me divinely:
I am falling to pieces already. I care not, though, like Anaxarchus,[12] I were [40 pounded to death in a mortar; and yet that death were fitter for usurers, gold and themselves to be beaten together, to make a most cordial cullis for the devil. He hath his uncle's villainous look already,
In decimo sexto.

Enter COURTIER.

Now, sir, what are you?

COURT. It is the pleasure, sir, of the [50 young duke,
That you forbear the presence and all rooms
That owe him reverence.

FLAM. So, the wolf and the raven
Are very pretty fools when they are young.
Is it your office, sir, to keep me out?

COURT. So the duke wills.

FLAM. Verily, master courtier, ex- [60 tremity is not to be used in all offices: say that a gentlewoman were taken out of her bed about midnight, and committed to Castle Angelo, to the tower yonder, with nothing about her but her smock, would it not show a cruel part in the gentleman-porter to lay claim to her upper garment, pull it o'er her head and ears, and put her in naked?

COURT. Very good: you are merry. [70

FLAM. Doth he make a court-ejectment of me? A flaming fire-brand casts more smoke without a chimney than within't. I'll smoor[13] some of them.

Enter FRANCISCO.

How now! thou art sad.

FRAN. I met even now with the most piteous sight.

FLAM. Thou meet'st another here, a pitiful [80
Degraded courtier.

FRAN. Your reverend mother
Is grown a very old woman in two hours.
I found them winding of Marcello's corse;
And there is such a solemn melody,
'Tween doleful songs, tears, and sad elegies,
Such as old grandams watching by the dead
Were wont to outwear the nights with, that, believe me, [91
I had no eyes to guide me forth the room,
They were so o'ercharged with water.

FLAM. I will see them.

FRAN. 'Twere much uncharity in you; for your sight
Will add unto their teaïs.

FLAM. I will see them:
They are behind the traverse; I'll discover [101
Their superstitious howling. [*Draws the curtain.*

[11] plovers.
[12] B, Anacharsis.
[13] smother.

CORNELIA, ZANCHE, *and three other Ladies discovered winding* MARCELLO'S *corse. A Song.*

CORN. This rosemary is withered; pray get fresh.
I would have these herbs grow up in his grave,
When I am dead and rotten. Reach the bays;
I'll tie a garland here about his head;
'Twill keep my boy from lightning. This sheet
I have kept this twenty year, and every day
Hallowed it with my prayers: I did not think
He should have wore it.
ZAN. Look you who are yonder.
CORN. Oh, reach me the flowers.
ZAN. <Her ladyship's foolish.
LADY. Alas! her grief
Hath turned her child again!>
CORN. You're very welcome:
There's rosemary for you;—[*to* FLAMINEO] and rue for you;—
[*To one of the Ladies*] Heart's-ease for you; I pray make much of it:
I have left more for myself.
FRAN., *indicating* FLAMINEO. Lady, who's this?
CORN. You are, I take it, the grave-maker.
FLAM. So!
ZAN. 'Tis Flamineo.
CORN. Will you make me such a fool? here's a white hand:
Can blood so soon be washed out?
let me see;
When screech-owls croak upon the chimney-tops,
And the strange cricket i' the oven sings and hops,
When yellow spots do on your hands appear,
Be certain then you of a corse shall hear.
Out upon't, how 'tis speckled! h'as handled a toad, sure. Cowslip-water is
good for the memory: pray, buy me three ounces of't.
FLAM. <I would I were from hence.>
CORN. Do you hear, sir? I'll give you a saying which my grandmother was wont, when she heard the bell toll, to sing o'er unto her lute.
FLAM. Do, an you will, do.
CORN. "Call for the robin-red-breast and the wren, [CORNELIA *doth this in several forms of distraction.*
Since o'er shady groves they hover,
And with leaves and flowers do cover
The friendless bodies of unburied men.
Call unto his funeral dole
The ant, the field-mouse, and the mole,
To rear him hillocks that shall keep him warm,
And (when gay tombs are robbed) sustain no harm;
But keep the wolf far thence, that's foe to men,
For with his nails he'll dig them up again."
They would not bury him 'cause he died in a quarrel;
But I have an answer for them:
"Let holy Church receive him duly,
Since he paid the church-tithes truly."
His wealth is summed; and this is all his store:
This poor men get; and great men get no more.
Now the wares are gone, we may shut up shop.
Bless you all, good people. [*Exeunt* CORNELIA, ZANCHE, *and Ladies.*
FLAM. I have a strange thing in me, to the which
I cannot give a name, without it be
Compassion. I pray, leave me. [*Exit* FRANCISCO.
This night I'll know the utmost of my fate;
I'll be resolved what my rich sister means
To assign me for my service. I have lived
Riotously ill, like some that live in court,
And sometimes, when my face was full of smiles,
Have felt the maze of conscience in my breast.
Oft gay and honored robes those tortures try:

We think caged birds sing, when indeed they cry.

Enter Brachiano's *ghost, in his leather cassock and breeches, boots and cowl; in his hand a pot of lily-flowers, with a skull in it.*

Ha! I can stand thee: nearer, nearer yet!
What a mockery hath death made of thee! thou look'st sad.
In what place art thou? in yon starry gallery?
Or in the cursëd dungeon?—No? not speak?
Pray, sir, resolve me what religion's best
For a man to die in? or is it in your knowledge
To answer me how long I have to live?
That's the most necessary question.
Not answer? are you still like some great men
That only walk like shadows up and down,
And to no purpose? say:—
[*The Ghost throws earth upon him, and shows him the skull.*
What's that? Oh, fatal! he throws earth upon me!
A dead man's skull beneath the roots of flowers!—
I pray, speak, sir: our Italian churchmen
Make us believe dead men hold conference
With their familiärs, and many times
Will come to bed to them, and eat with them. [*Exit Ghost.*
He's gone; and see, the skull and earth are vanished.
This is beyond melancholy. I do dare my fate
To do its worst. Now to my sister's lodging,
And sum up all these horrors: the disgrace
The prince threw on me; next, the piteous sight
Of my dead brother; and my mother's dotage;
And last this terrible vision: all these
Shall with Vittoria's bounty turn to good,
Or I will drown this weapon in her blood. [*Exit.*

Scene V

Francisco *and* Lodovico *are passing along a street in Padua.* Hortensio *is following, watching them.*

Lod. My lord, upon my soul, you shall no further;
You have most ridiculously engaged yourself
Too far already. For my part, I have paid
All my debts; so, if I should chance to fall,
My creditors fall not with me; and I vow
To quit all in this bold assembly
To the meanest follower. My lord, leave the city;
Or I'll forswear the murder. [*Exit.*
Fran. Farewell, Lodovico!
If thou dost perish in this glorious act,
I'll rear unto thy memory that fame
Shall in the ashes keep alive thy name. [*Exit.*
Hort. There's some black deed on foot. I'll presently [14]
Down to the citadel, and raise some force.
These strong court-factions, that do brook no checks,
In the career oft break the riders' necks. [*Exit.*

Scene VI

Vittoria *is in a room in* Brachiano's *palace, with a book in her hand.* Zanche *is with her.* Flamineo *enters.*

Flam. What, are you at your prayers? give o'er.
Vit. How, ruffian?
Flam. I come to you 'bout worldly busïness:
Sit down, sit down:—nay, stay, blowze,[15] you may hear it:
The doors are fast enough.
Vit. Ha! are you drunk?
Flam. Yes, yes, with wormwood-water: you shall taste
Some of it presently.

[14] at once.
[15] wench.

VIT. What intends the Fury?
FLAM. You are my lord's executrix; and I claim
Reward for my long service.
VIT. For your service? [20
FLAM. Come, therefore, here is pen and ink; set down
What you will give me. [VITTORIA *writes.*
VIT. There!
FLAM. Ha! have you done already? 'Tis a most short conveyance.
VIT. I will read it:
"I give that portion to thee, and no other,
Which Cain groaned under, having slain his brother." [30
FLAM. A most courtly patent to beg by!
VIT. You are a villain.
FLAM. Is't come to this? They say, affrights cure agues:
Thou hast a devil in thee; I will try
If I can scare him from thee. Nay, sit still:
My lord hath left me yet two case of jewels [40
Shall make me scorn your bounty; you shall see them. [*Exit.*
VIT. Sure, he's distracted.
ZAN. Oh, he's desperate:
For your own safety give him gentle language.

Re-enter FLAMINEO *with two case*[16] *of pistols.*

FLAM. Look, these are better far at a dead lift[17] [50
Than all your jewel-house.
VIT. And yet, methinks,
These stones have no fair lustre, they are ill set.
FLAM. I'll turn the right side towards you: you shall see
How they will sparkle.
VIT. Turn this horror from me!
What do you want? what would you have me do? [60
Is not all mine yours? have I any children?
FLAM. Pray thee, good woman, do not trouble me
With this vain worldly business; say your prayers:
I made a vow to my deceasëd lord,
Neither yourself nor I should outlive him
The numbering of four hours.
VIT. Did he enjoin it? [70
FLAM. He did; and 'twas a deadly jealousy,
Lest any should enjoy thee after him,
That urged him vow me to it. For my death,
I did propound it voluntarily, knowing,
If he could not be safe in his own court,
Being a great duke, what hope, then, for us?
VIT. This is your melancholy and [80 despair.
FLAM. Away! Fool thou art to think that politicians
Do use to kill the effects of injuries,
And let the cause live. Shall we groan in irons,
Or be a shameful and a weighty burden
To a public scaffold? This is my resolve; [89
I would not live at any man's entreaty,
Nor die at any's bidding.
VIT. Will you hear me?
FLAM. My life hath done service to other men;
My death shall serve mine own turn. Make you ready.
VIT. Do you mean to die indeed?
FLAM. With as much pleasure
As e'er my father gat me.
VIT. Are the doors locked? [100
ZAN. Yes, madam.
VIT. Are you grown an atheist? will you turn your body,
Which is the goodly palace of the soul,
To the soul's slaughter-house? Oh, the cursëd devil,
Which doth present us with all other sins
Thrice-candied o'er (despair with gall and stibium; [110
Yet we carouse it off)—[*To* ZANCHE.]
<Cry out for help!>
Makes us forsake that which was made for man,

[16] pairs.
[17] at an extremity.

The world, to sink to that was made for devils,
Eternal darkness!
ZAN., *calling*. Help, help!
FLAM. I'll stop your throat
With winter plums.
VIT. I prithee, yet remember,
Millions are now in graves, which at last day,
Like mandrakes, shall rise shrieking.
FLAM. Leave your prating,
For these are but grammatical laments,
Feminine arguments: and they move me,
As some in pulpits move their auditory,
More with their exclamatiön than sense
Of reason or sound doctrine.
ZAN. <Gentle madam,
Seem to consent, only persuade him teach
The way to death; let him die first.
VIT. 'Tis good.
I apprehend it.>
To kill one's self is meat that we must take
Like pills, not chew't, but quickly swallow it;
The smart o' the wound, or weakness of the hand,
May else bring treble torments.
FLAM. I have held it
A wretched and most miserable life
Which is not able to die.
VIT. O, but frailty!—
Yet I am now resolved. Farewell, affliction!
Behòld, Brachiano, I, that while you lived
Did make a flaming altar of my heart
To sacrifice unto you, now am ready
To sacrifice heart and all.—Farewell, Zanche!
ZAN. How, madam! do you think that I'll outlive you;
Especially when my best self, Flamineo,
Goes the same voyage?
FLAM. O, most lovëd Moor!
ZAN. Only by all my love let me entreat you,
Since it is most necessary one of us
Do violence on ourselves, let you or I
Be her sad taster; teach her how to die.
FLAM. Thou dost instruct me nobly: take these pistols.
Because my hand is stained with blood already,
Two of these you shall level at my breast,
The other[18] 'gainst your own, and so we'll die
Most equally contented: but first swear
Not to outlive me.
VIT. AND ZAN. Most religiously.
FLAM. Then here's an end of me; farewell, daylight!
And, O contemptible physic, that dost take
So long a study only to preserve
So short a life, I take my leave of thee!—
These are two cupping-glasses that shall draw
All my infected blood out. Are you ready?
VIT. AND ZAN. Ready.
FLAM. Whither shall I go now? O Lucian, thy ridiculous purgatory! to find Alexander the Great cobbling shoes, Pompey tagging points, and Julius Cæsar making hair-buttons! Hannibal selling blacking, and Augustus crying garlic! Charlemagne selling lists[19] by the dozen, and King Pepin crying apples in a cart drawn with one horse!
Whether I resolve to fire, earth, water, air,
Or all the elements by scruples, I know not,
Nor greatly care.—Shoot, shoot:
Of all deaths the violent death is best;
For from ourselves it steals ourselves so fast,
The pain, once apprehended, is quite past.
[*They shoot: he falls. They run to him, and tread upon him.*
VIT. What, are you dropped?
FLAM. I am mixed with earth already: as you are noble,
Perform your vows, and bravely follow me.
VIT. Whither? to hell?
ZAN. To most assured damnation?
VIT. O thou most cursëd devil!

[18] others
[19] strips of cloth.

ZAN. Thou art caught—
VIT. In thine own engine. I tread the fire out
That would have been my ruin. [219
FLAM. Will you be perjured? what a religious oath was Styx, that the gods never durst swear by, and violate! Oh, that we had such an oath to minister, and to be so well kept in our courts of justice!
VIT. Think whither thou art going.
ZAN. And remember
What villainies thou hast acted.
VIT. This thy death [229
Shall make men,[20] like a blazing ominous star,
Look up and tremble.
FLAM. O, I am caught with a springe! [21]
VIT. You see the fox comes many times short home;
'Tis here proved true.
FLAM. Killed with a couple of [238 braches! [22]
VIT. No fitter offering for the infernal Furies
Than one in whom they reigned while he was living!
FLAM. Oh, the way's dark and horrid! I cannot see:
Shall I have no company?
VIT. Oh, yes, thy sins
Do run before thee to fetch fire from hell,
To light thee thither. [250
FLAM. Oh, I smell soot,
Most stinking soot! the chimney is a-fire:
My liver's parboiled, like Scotch holly-bread;
There's a plumber laying pipes in my guts, it scalds.—
Wilt thou outlive me?
ZAN. Yes, and drive a stake
Through thy body; for we'll give it out
Thou didst this violence upon thyself. [260
FLAM. O cunning devils! now I have tried your love,
And doubled all your reaches.—I am not wounded; [*Rises.*
The pistols held no bullets: 'twas a plot
To prove your kindness to me; and I live,
To punish your ingratitude. I knew,
One time or other, you would find a way
To give me a strong potion.—O men [270
That lie upon your death-beds, and are haunted
With howling wives, ne'er trust them! they'll re-marry
Ere the worm pierce your winding-sheet, ere the spider
Make a thin curtain for your epitaphs.—
How cunning you were to discharge! do you practise at the Artillery-yard?—Trust a woman? never, never! Brachiano [280 be my precedent. We lay our souls to pawn to the devil for a little pleasure, and a woman makes the bill of sale. That ever man should marry! For one Hypermnestra that saved her lord and husband, forty-nine of her sisters cut their husbands' throats all in one night: there was a shoal of virtuous horse-leeches!—[*Producing two other pistols.*] Here are two other instruments. [290
VIT., *calling*. Help, help!

Enter LODOVICO *and* GASPARO *(disguised as Capuchins)*, CARLO *and* PEDRO.

FLAM. What noise is that? ha! false keys i' the court!
LOD. We have brought you a masque.
FLAM. A matachin,[23] it seems
By your drawn swords. Churchmen turned revellers!
GAS.[24] Isabella! Isabella! [300
LOD. Do you know us now? [*They throw off their disguise.*
FLAM. Lodovico! and Gasparo!
LOD. Yes; and that Moor the duke gave pension to
Was the great Duke of Florence.
VIT. Oh, we are lost!
FLAM. You shall not take justice from forth my hands. [309
Oh, let me kill her! I'll cut my safety
Through your coats of steel. Fate's a spaniel;

[20] B, me. The emendation is Mr. Lucas's.
[21] trick, trap.
[22] bitches.
[23] a sword-dance of fools.
[24] The first two quartos attribute this to "Con.", which, it has been suggested, may stand for "Conspirators."

We cannot beat it from us. What remains now?
Let all that do ill, take this precedent:
Man may his fate foresee, but not prevent;
And, of all axioms, this shall win the prize:
'Tis better to be fortunate than wise.
GAS. Bind him to the pillar.
VIT. Oh, your gentle pity!
I have seen a blackbird that would sooner fly
To a man's bosom, than to stay the gripe
Of the fierce sparrowhawk.
GAS. Your hope deceives you.
VIT. If Florence be i' the court, would he would kill me!
GAS. Fool! princes give rewards with their own hands,
But death or punishment by the hands of others.
LOD. Sirrah, you once did strike me: I'll strike you
Into the centre.
FLAM. Thou'lt do it like a hangman,
A base hangman, not like a noble fellow;
For thou see'st I cannot strike again.
LOD. Dost laugh?
FLAM. Would'st have me die, as I was born, in whining?
GAS. Recommend yourself to Heaven.
FLAM. No, I will carry
Mine own commendations thither.
LOD. Oh, could I kill you forty times a day,
And use't four year together, 'twere too little!
Naught grieves but that you are too few to feed
The famine of our vengeance. What dost think on?
FLAM. Nothing; of nothing: leave thy idle questions.
I am i' th' way to study a long silence:
To prate were idle. I remember nothing.
There's nothing of so infinite vexation
As man's own thoughts.
LOD. O thou glorious strumpet!
Could I divide thy breath from this pure air,
When't leaves thy body, I would suck it up,
And breathe't upon some dunghill.
VIT. You my death's-man!
Methinks thou dost not look horrid enough;
Thou hast too good a face to be a hangman:
If thou be, do thy office in right form;
Fall down upon thy knees, and ask forgiveness.
LOD. Oh, thou hast been a most prodigious comet;
But I'll cut off your train.—Kill the Moor first.
VIT. You shall not kill her first; behold my breast:
I will be waited on in death; my servant
Shall never go before me.
GAS. Are you so brave?
VIT. Yes, I shall welcome death
As princes do some great ambassadors;
I'll meet thy weapon half way.
LOD. Thou dost tremble.
Methinks fear should dissolve thee into air.
VIT. Oh, thou art deceived, I am too true a woman:
Conceit can never kill me. I'll tell thee what:
I will not in my death shed one base tear;
Or, if look pale, for want of blood, not fear.
CARL. Thou art my task, black Fury.
ZAN. I have blood
As red as either of theirs: wilt drink some?
'Tis good for the falling-sickness. I am proud
Death cannot alter my complexiön,
For I shall ne'er look pale.
LOD. Strike, strike,
With a joint motion! [*They stab* VITTORIA, ZANCHE, *and* FLAMINEO.[25]
VIT. 'Twas a manly blow!

[25] To assume, as Professor Sampson does, that Carlo and Pedro are only other names for Lodovico and Gasparo means that two persons performed the impossible task of killing three, striking "with a joint motion." It may rather be supposed that Gasparo, Pedro, and Carlo did the stabbing under orders from Lodovico.

The next thou giv'st, murder some sucking infant;
And then thou wilt be famous.
FLAM. Oh, what blade is't?
A Toledo, or an English fox?
I ever thought a cutler should distinguish
The cause of my death, rather than a doctor.
Search my wound deeper; tent it with the steel
That made it.
VIT. Oh, my greatest sin lay in my blood;
Now my blood pays for't.
FLAM. Thou'rt a noble sister!
I love thee now: if woman do breed man,
She ought to teach him manhood. Fare thee well.
Know, many glorious women that are famed
For masculine virtue have been viciöus;
Only a happier silence did betide them:
She hath no faults who hath the art to hide them.
VIT. My soul, like to a ship in a black storm,
Is driven I know not whither.
FLAM. Then cast anchor.
Prosperity doth bewitch men, seeming clear;
But seas do laugh, show white, when rocks are near.
We cease to grieve, cease to be fortune's slaves,
Nay, cease to die, by dying. Art thou gone?
And thou so near the bottom? false report,
Which says that women vie with the nine Muses
For nine tough durable lives! I do not look
Who went before, nor who shall follow me;
No, at myself I will begin and end.
While we look up to Heaven, we confound
Knowledge with knowledge. Oh, I am in a mist!
VIT. Oh, happy they that never saw the court,
Nor ever knew great men but by report!
FLAM. I recover like a spent taper, for a flash,
And instantly go out.
Let all that belong to great men remember th' old wives' tradition, to be like the lions i' th' Tower on Candlemas-day: to mourn if the sun shine, for fear of the pitiful remainder of winter to come.
'Tis well yet there's some goodness in my death;
My life was a black charnel. I have caught
An everlasting cold; I have lost my voice
Most irrecoverably.—Farewell, glorious villains!
This busy trade of life appears most vain,
Since rest breeds rest, where all seek pain by pain.
Let no harsh flattering bells resound my knell;
Strike, thunder, and strike loud, to my farewell! *Dies.*
ENGLISH AM., *within.* This way, this way! break ope the doors! this way!
LOD. Ha! are we betrayed?
Why, then let's constantly die all together,
And, having finished this most noble deed,
Defy the worst of fate, not fear to bleed.

Enter AMBASSADORS *and* GIOVANNI.

ENGLISH AM. Keep back the prince: shoot, shoot. *They shoot, and* LODOVICO *falls.*
LOD. Oh, I am wounded!
I fear I shall be ta'en.
GIO. You bloody villains,
By what authority have you committed
This massacre?
LOD. By thine.
GIO. Mine?
LOD. Yes; thy uncle,
Which is a part of thee, enjoined us to't:
Thou know'st me, I am sure; I am Count Lodowick;
And thy most noble uncle, in disguise,

Was last night in thy court.
GIO. Ha!
CARL. Yes, that Moor
Thy father chose his pensioner.
GIO. He turned murderer!—
Away with them to prison and to torture!
All that have hands in this shall taste our justice,
As I hope Heaven.
LOD. I do glory yet
That I can call this act mine own. For my part,
The rack, the gallows, and the torturing wheel,
Shall be but sound sleeps to me: here's my rest;
I limned this night-piece, and it was my best.
GIO. Remove the bodies.—See, my honored lord[s],
What use you ought make of their punishment:
Let guilty men remember, their black deeds
Do lean on crutches made of slender reeds.

The play concludes with the following note by the author:

Instead of an Epilogue only this of Martial supplies me:
Haec fuerint nobis praemia, si placui.

THE WINTER'S TALE

BY

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

INTRODUCTION

There are many diverse views held as to which was Shakespeare's latest play. To judge by the ordinary metrical statistics, it was "The Winter's Tale" amongst the plays not usually regarded as collaborated; to judge by the sentence-construction and by the style of the verse, without taking cognizance of its mechanism, it was "Cymbeline"; to judge by the spirit, the dramatic principle, the intellectual content, it was "Coriolanus." To many it seems to be "The Tempest," because that play is held to be a sort of farewell allegory and is, in any case, undoubtedly one of the latest. And, besides all these, there is the play of "Henry VIII," in which he collaborated with Fletcher, and which was certainly staged at a later date than can be with certainty predicated for any of the others. Both "The Tempest" and "The Winter's Tale" may be definitely dated prior to "Henry VIII," because they are known to have been on the stage before the burning of the Globe, the occasion of which was the production of "Henry VIII"; regarding "Cymbeline" and "Coriolanus," there is no such certainty.

Originally licensed by Sir George Buc, "The Winter's Tale" can hardly date earlier than November, 1606, when Buc is first known to have granted a license. Its downward limit is May, 1613, when the Vertue MS. shows it to have been presented at Court. This limit is usually taken as May, 1611, when Dr. Simon Forman is supposed to have seen it at the Globe; but, till the genuineness of the extracts from that worthy's diary have been proved by an expert examination, they are not to be considered as affording any evidence at all. As most of Shakespeare's plays are based upon early originals, it has been suggested that "The Winter's Tale" may be a rewriting of the "Winter Night's Pastime" entered in the Stationers' Register in May, 1594; but the play contains no signs of early writing. There may perhaps be significance also in the absence of the play from Meres' list. A study of the verse should not leave anyone in much doubt that it is a late effort; and it is to be noted that not only do we have it alongside of "The Tempest" in the Vertue MS., but that also we have in Jonson's "Bartholomew Fair," 1614, what must, in the circumstances, be taken to be a tolerably clear allusion to the same pair of plays. It has been thought that the reference to "those that beget Tales, Tempests, and

suchlike drolleries" is to the writers of puppet-plays rather than of regular dramas; but, when Jonson brackets it with a remark about "a servant-monster," he seems to be dotting the "i," in the case of "The Tempest" at least.

Mention must also be made of Collier's ingenious argument that "The Winter's Tale" was later than "The Tempest," because in it Shakespeare varied from his source (Greene's novel, "Pandosto") in not setting the babe Perdita adrift in an open boat, the reason for his not doing so being that he had already made use of such a device in "The Tempest." On the whole, 1612 seems as good a date as may be surmised for "The Winter's Tale." Those who like to think—it is hard to say why—that Shakespeare gave up writing for the stage in 1610 may object to the lateness of this date; but for the upholding of their theory they not only have to discount the production of "Henry VIII" in 1613; they have also to contend with the fact that, unless Shakespeare was a mental wreck (and there is not the slightest reason for supposing anything of the sort), he is not at all likely to have abandoned writing for the stage before he was 50 at least. Moreover, we are told by the Rev. John Ward, writing in the latter part of the seventeenth century, of a tradition that Shakespeare, when living at New Place, regularly supplied the London stage with two plays a year. That tradition is exceedingly likely to be true; and we know, moreover, that Shakespeare retained his interests in London, and spent no small proportion of his time there. What more probable than that he should enter into such an arrangement or that it should be ardently desired by his company? In this tradition we may have the clue to much in regard to his later work that has puzzled scholars.

It has been questioned whether the speech of Time which prefaces IV is genuine; but, though it cannot be said to be clearly Shakespeare's, it also cannot be said to be clearly not his; and, in view of the fact that there is nothing else to be considered doubtful, it may be accepted. In the scene that follows, the prose is of a stiffer quality than is usual with Shakespeare; but there is no reason to question it. The play is obviously greatly influenced by the Beaumont and Fletcher romances, and is full of the faults of its class. The finale is shockingly scrambled. Enormous praise has been showered upon the two female characters; but it is to be suspected that, if they had not been Shakespearean creations, they would not have experienced such eulogies. The nobility of Hermione is sadly flawed by the fact that she is willing to leave her repentant and stricken husband in the deepest misery and remorse for a period of no less than sixteen years. That her love for him had been destroyed we may well believe; that perhaps the majority of women would in the circumstances have proved equally vindictive may

be granted; but to ask us to regard her as a noble character is unreasonable. Similarly, we are told that Perdita is a model of sweetness; but it is to be noted that she was ready to run away with her princely lover and leave her supposed father to the deadly torments that she had every reason to expect would be inflicted upon him by the ruthless and offended Polixenes. For all the superficial sweetness of Perdita, she is, in fact, utterly selfish. By far the finest thing in the play is the rendering of the jealousy of Leontes. This is truly masterly, and is to be contrasted with Shakespeare's two other studies in jealousy. In Ford it is a natural state, lending itself to the purposes of comedy; in Othello, it is an unnatural state, created and fostered by a scheming and unscrupulous scoundrel; in Leontes, it is a pathological condition, not brought about by outside suggestion, but by a mania developing suddenly and without due reason in the man himself. It may be objected, not without warrant, that the outbreak of what is really a form of madness should have been better prepared for; but, though, from the dramatic point of view, this may be conceded, the fact remains that from the pathological point of view no fault is to be found.

Is it, by the way, to be regarded as a piece of poetic justice that the kindly and well-meaning Camillo should be married off to the more admirable than amiable Paulina? For some reason, critics have contrasted Camillo very favorably with Antigonus, the lady's former husband, who really was quite an amiable character. We are told that his being eaten by a bear "was a severe, but not unrighteous retribution," because he was inclined to believe what Leontes told him; but it may be doubted if critics of this stamp have got Shakespeare's point of view; for Antigonus escaped much the more lightly of the two: he, at least, had a quick death.

CHARACTERS

Leontes, *King of Sicilia.*
Mamillius, *Prince of Sicilia.*
Camillo, Antigonus, Cleomenes, Dion — *Lords of Sicilia.*
Polixenes, *King of Bohemia.*
Florizel, *his Son.*
Archidamus, *a Lord of Bohemia.*
A Mariner.
A Gaoler.
An old Shepherd, *reputed Father of Perdita.*
Clown, *his Son.*
Servant *to the old Shepherd.*
Autolycus, *a Rogue.*
Hermione, *Queen to Leontes.*
Perdita, *Daughter to Leontes and Hermione.*
Paulina, *wife to Antigonus.*
Emilia, *a Lady attending the Queen.*
Mopsa, Dorcas — *Shepherdesses*
Time, *as Chorus.*
Sicilian Lords and Ladies, Attendants, Guards, Satyrs, Shepherds, Shepherdesses, &c.

Place: *Sicilia, and Bohemia.*
Time: *Indefinite.*

THE WINTER'S TALE

ACT ONE

Scene I

Polixenes, *the Bohemian monarch, is on a visit to his old playfellow, the Sicilian King.*

Camillo *is chatting, in one of the rooms of the palace, to* Archidamus, *a Bohemian Lord, who has accompanied his sovereign on this journey.*

Arch. If you shall chance, Camillo, to visit Bohemia, on the like occasion [9 whereon my services are now on foot, you shall see, as I have said, great difference betwixt our Bohemia and your Sicilia.

Cam. I think, this coming summer, the King of Sicilia means to pay Bohemia the visitation which he justly owes him.

Arch. Wherein our entertainment shall shame us we will be justified in our loves: for indeed—

Cam. Beseech you— [19

Arch. Verily, I speak it in the freedom of my knowledge: we cannot with such magnificence—in so rare—I know not what to say. We will give you sleepy drinks, that your senses, unintelligent of our insufficience, may, though they cannot praise us, as little accuse us.

Cam. You pay a great deal too dear for what's given freely.

Arch. Believe me, I speak as my understanding instructs me, and as mine honesty puts it to utterance. [31

Cam. Sicilia cannot show himself overkind to Bohemia. They were trained together in their childhoods; and there rooted betwixt them then such an affection which cannot choose but branch now. Since their more mature dignities and royal necessities made separation of their society, their encounters, though not personal, have been royally attor- [40 neyed with interchange of gifts, letters, loving embassies; that they have seemed to be together, though absent, shook hands, as over a vast, and embraced, as it were, from the ends of opposed winds. The heavens continue their loves!

Arch. I think there is not in the world either malice or matter to alter it. You have an unspeakable comfort of your [49 young Prince Mamillius: it is a gentleman of the greatest promise that ever came into my note.

Cam. I very well agree with you in the hopes of him. It is a gallant child; one that indeed physics the subject, makes old hearts fresh; they that went on crutches ere he was born desire yet their life to see him a man.

Arch. Would they else be content to die? [60

Com. Yes; if there were no other excuse why they should desire to live.

Arch. If the king had no son, they would desire to live, on crutches, till he had one.

Scene II

Leontes, Hermione, *who is well advanced in pregnancy,* Mamillius, Polixenes, *and* Camillo,[1] *are in a room of state in the palace.* Polixenes *is bent on departing; but* Leontes *is very unwilling to have him go.*

Pol. Nine changes of the wat'ry star
have been
The shepherd's note since we have left
our throne [10

[1] Camillo has only just left the stage and straightway re-enters in another scene, a very unusual proceeding. It might be supposed that he remained on the stage, and that the opening scene continued with the advent of Leontes and the others; but not only is the "exeunt" of both marked, but also they give no hint of perceiving the party's approach. This, then, is to be considered a new scene in another room of the palace.

Without a burden: time as long again
Would be filled up, my brother, with our thanks;
And yet we should for perpetuity
Go hence in debt: and therefore, like a cipher,
Yet standing in rich place, I multiply
With one "We thank you" many thousands moe
That go before it.
LEON. Stay your thanks awhile,
And pay them when you part.
POL. Sir, that's to-morrow.
I am questioned by my fears, of what may chance
Or breed upon our absence; that may blow
No sneaping winds at home, to make us say,
"This is put forth too truly!" Besides, I have stayed
To tire your royalty.
LEON. We are tougher, brother,
Than you can put us to't.
POL. No longer stay.
LEON. One seven-night longer.
POL. Very sooth, to-morrow.
LEON. We'll part the time between's then; and in that
I'll no gainsaying.
POL. Press me not, beseech you, so.
There is no tongue that moves, none, none i' th' world,
So soon as yours could win me: so it should now,
Were there necessity in your request, although
'Twere needful I denied it. My affairs
Do even drag me homeward; which to hinder
Were in your love a whip to me; my stay,
To you a charge and trouble: to save both,
Farewell, our brother.
LEON. Tongue-tied, our queen? speak you.
HER. I had thought, sir, to have held my peace until
You had drawn oaths from him not to stay. You, sir,
Charge him too coldly: tell him, you are sure
All in Bohemia's well: this satisfaction
The by-gone day proclaimed: say this to him,
He's beat from his best ward.
LEON. Well said, Hermione.
HER. To tell he longs to see his son were strong:
But let him say so then, and let him go;
But let him swear so, and he shall not stay,
We'll thwack him hence with distaffs.
[*To* POLIXENES.] Yet of your royal presence I'll adventure
The borrow of a week. When at Bohemia
You take my lord, I'll give him my commission
To let him there a month behind the gest
Prefixed for's parting: yet, good deed, Leontes,
I love thee not a jar o' th' clock behind
What lady she her lord.—You'll stay?
POL. No, madam.
HER. Nay, but you will?
POL. I may not, verily.
[LEONTES *leaves them, and plays with* MAMILLIUS.
HER. Verily!
You put me off with limber vows; but I,
Though you would seek t' unsphere the stars with oaths,
Should yet say, "Sir, no going." Verily,
You shall not go: a lady's "verily" 's
As potent as a lord's. Will you go yet?
Force me to keep you as a prisoner,
Not like a guest; so you shall pay your fees
When you depart, and save your thanks. How say you?
My prisoner, or my guest? by your dread "verily,"
One of them you shall be.
POL. Your guest, then, madam:
To be your prisoner should import offending;
Which is for me less easy to commit
Than you to punish.
HER. Not your gaoler then,

But your kind hostess. Come, I'll question you
Of my lord's tricks and yours when you were boys:
You were pretty lordings then.
POL. We were, fair queen,
Two lads that thought there was no more behind
But such a day to-morrow as to-day, [120
And to be boy eternal.
HER. Was not my lord the verier wag o' th' two?
POL. We were as twinned lambs that did frisk i' th' sun,
And bleat the one at th' other: what we changed
Was innocence for innocence; we knew not [129
The doctrine of ill-doing, no, nor dreamed
That any did. Had we pursued that life,
And our weak spirits ne'er been higher reared
With stronger blood,[2] we should have answered heaven
Boldly, "not guilty," the imposition cleared
Hereditary ours.
HER. By this we gather
You have tripped since. [140
POL. O! my most sacred lady,
Temptations have since then been born to's; for
In those unfledged days was my wife a girl;
Your precious self had then not crossed the eyes
Of my young playfellow.
HER. Grace to boot! [149
Of this make no conclusion, lest you say
Your queen and I are devils; yet, go on:
Th' offences we have made you do we'll answer;
If you first sinned with us, and that with us
You did continue fault, and that you slipped not
With any but with us.
LEON., *returning*. Is he won yet?
HER. He'll stay, my lord. [160
LEON. <At my request he would not.>
Hermione, my dearest, thou never spok'st
To better purpose.
HER. Never?
LEON. Never, but once.
HER. What! have I twice said well? when was't before?
I prithee tell me; cram's with praise, and make's [170
As fat as tame things: one good deed, dying tongueless,
Slaughters a thousand waiting upon that.
Our praises are our wages: you may ride's
With one soft kiss a thousand furlongs ere
With spur we heat an acre. But to th' goal:
My last good deed was to entreat his stay: [181
What was my first? it has an elder sister,
Or I mistake you: O! would her name were Grace.
But once before I spoke to th' purpose: when?
Nay, let me have't; I long.
LEON. Why, that was when
Three crabbëd months had soured themselves to death, [190
Ere I could make thee open thy white hand
And clap thyself my love; then didst thou utter,
"I am yours for ever."
HER. 'Tis grace indeed.
Why, lo you now, I have spoke to th' purpose twice:
The one for ever earned a royal husband,
Th' other for some while a friend. [*Giving her hand to* POLIXENES. [201
LEON. <Too hot, too hot!
To mingle friendship far is mingling bloods.
I have *tremor cordis* on me: my heart dances;
But not for joy; not joy. This entertainment
May a free face put on, derive a liberty
From heartiness, from bounty, fertile bosom, [211

[2] passions.

And well become the agent: 't may, I grant;
But to be paddling palms and pinching fingers,
As now they are, and making practised smiles
As in a looking-glass; and then to sigh, as 'twere
The mort o' the deer; O! that is entertainment [221
My bosom likes not, nor my brows.> Mamillius,
Art thou my boy?
MAM. Ay, my good lord.
LEON. I' fecks?
Why, that's my bawcock. What! hast smutched thy nose?
They say it is a copy out of mine. Come, captain, [230
We must be neat; not neat, but cleanly, captain:
And yet the steer, the heifer, and the calf,
Are all called neat. <Still virginalling
Upon his palm!> How now, you wanton calf!
Art thou my calf?
MAM. Yes, if you will, my lord.
LEON. Thou want'st a rough pash and the shoots that I have, [240
To be full like me: yet they say we are
Almost as like as eggs; women say so,
That will say anything; but were they false
As o'er-dyed blacks, as wind, as waters, false
As dice are to be wished by one that fixes
No bourn 'twixt his and mine, yet were it true
To say this boy were like me. Come, [250 sir page,
Look on me with your welkin eye: sweet villain!
Most dear'st! my collop![3] Can thy dam?—may't be?—
<Affection! thy intention stabs the centre:
Thou dost make possible things not so held,
Communicat'st with dreams.—How can this be? [261
With what's unreal thou co-active art,
And fellow'st nothing: then, 'tis very credent
Thou mayst co-join with something; and thou dost,
And that beyond commission, and I find it,
And that to the infection of my brains
And hard'ning of my brows.> [270
POL. What means Sicilia?
HER. He something seems unsettled.
POL. Ho, my lord!
What cheer? how is't with you, best brother?[4]
HER. You look
As if you held a brow of much distraction:
Are you moved, my lord?
LEON. No, in good earnest. [280
How sometimes nature will betray its folly,
Its tenderness, and make itself a pastime
To harder bosoms! Looking on the lines
Of my boy's face, methoughts I did recoil
Twenty-three years, and saw myself unbreeched,
In my green velvet coat, my dagger muzzled, [290
Lest it should bite its master, and so prove,
As ornament oft does, too dangerous:
How like, methought, I then was to this kernel,
This squash, this gentleman.—Mine honest friend,
Will you take eggs for money?
MAM. No, my lord, I'll fight.
LEON. You will? why, happy man be's dole!—My brother, [301
Are you so fond of your young prince as we
Do seem to be of ours?
POL. If at home, sir,
He's all my exercise, my mirth, my matter,
Now my sworn friend, and then mine enemy; [309
My parasite, my soldier, statesman, all:
He makes a July's day short as December,

[3] piece of my flesh.

[4] B gives this line to Leontes.

And with his varying childness cures in me
Thoughts that would thick my blood.
LEON. So stands this squire
Officed with me. We two will walk, my lord,
And leave you to your graver steps. Hermione,
How thou lov'st us, show in our brother's welcome:
Let what is dear in Sicily be cheap:
Next to thyself and my young rover, he's
Apparent to my heart.
HER. If you would seek us,
We are yours i' th' garden: shall's attend you there?
LEON. To your own bents dispose you: you'll be found,
Be you beneath the sky. <I am angling now,
Though you perceive me not how I give line.
Go to, go to!
How she holds up the neb,[5] the bill to him,
And arms her with the boldness of a wife
To her allowing husband! [*Exeunt* POLIXENES *and* HERMIONE.
Gone already!
Inch-thick, knee-deep, o'er head and ears a forked one!>
Go play, boy, play; thy mother plays; and I
Play too, but so disgraced a part, whose issue
Will hiss me to my grave: contempt and clamor
Will be my knell. Go play, boy, play. <There have been,
Or I am much deceived, cuckolds ere now;
And many a man there is even at this present,
Now, while I speak this, holds his wife by the arm,
That little thinks she has been sluiced in's absence,
And his pond fished by his next neighbor, by
Sir Smile, his neighbor: nay, there's comfort in't,

[5] mouth.

Whiles other men have gates, and those gates opened,
As mine, against their will. Should all despair
That have revolted wives, the tenth of mankind
Would hang themselves. Physic for't there is none;
It is a bawdy planet, that will strike
Where 'tis predominant; and 'tis powerful, think it,
From east, west, north, and south: be it concluded,
No barricado for a belly: know't;
It will let in and out the enemy
With bag and baggage. Many a thousand on's
Have the disease, and feel't not.> How now, boy!
MAM. I am like you, they say.
LEON. Why, that's some comfort.
What! Camillo there!
CAM. Ay, my good lord.
LEON. Go play, Mamillius; thou'rt an honest man. [*Exit* MAMILLIUS.
Camillo, this great sir will yet stay longer.
CAM. You had much ado to make his anchor hold:
When you cast out, it still came home.
LEON. Didst note it?
CAM. He would not stay at your petitions; made
His business more material.
LEON. Didst perceive it?
<They're here with me already, whisp'ring, rounding
"Sicilia is a—so-forth." 'Tis far gone,
When I shall gust[6] it last.> How came't, Camillo,
That he did stay?
CAM. At the good queen's entreaty.
LEON. "At the queen's" be't: "good" should be pertinent;
But so it is, it is not. Was this taken
By any understanding pate but thine?
For thy conceit is soaking; will draw in
More than the common blocks: not noted, is't,
But of the finer natures? by some severals

[6] perceive.

Of head-piece extraordinary? lower messes
Perchance are to this business purblind? say.
CAM. Business, my lord! I think most understand [420
Bohemia stays here longer.
LEON. Ha!
CAM. Stays here longer.
LEON. Ay, but why?
CAM. To satisfy your highness and the entreaties
Of our most gracious mistress.
LEON. Satisfy!
Th' entreaties of your mistress! satisfy!
Let that suffice. I have trusted thee, Camillo, [431
With all the nearest things to my heart, as well
My chamber-councils, wherein, priest-like, thou
Hast cleansed my bosom: I from thee departed
Thy penitent reformed; but we have been
Deceived in thy integrity, deceived [440
In that which seems so.
CAM. Be it forbid, my lord!
LEON. To bide upon't, thou art not honest; or,
If thou inclin'st that way, thou art a coward,
Which hoxes[7] honesty behind, restraining
From course required; or else thou must be counted [449
A servant grafted in my serious trust,
And therein negligent; or else a fool
That seest a game played home, the rich stake drawn,
And tak'st it all for jest.
CAM. My gracious lord,
I may be negligent, foolish, and fearful;
In every one of these no man is free,
But that his negligence, his folly, fear,
Among the infinite doings of the world,
Sometime puts forth. In your affairs, my lord, [461
If ever I were wilful-negligent,
It was my folly; if industriously
I played the fool, it was my negligence,
Not weighing well the end; if ever fearful
To do a thing, where I the issue doubted,
Whereof the execution did cry out
Against the non-performance, 'twas a fear [470
Which oft infects the wisest: these, my lord,
Are such allowed infirmities that honesty
Is never free of; but, beseech your Grace,
Be plainer with me: let me know my trespass
By its own visage; if I then deny it,
'Tis none of mine.
LEON. Ha' not you seen, Camillo,—
But that's past doubt; you have, or your eyeglass [481
Is thicker than a cuckold's horn—or heard—
For to a vision so apparent rumor
Cannot be mute—or thought—for cogitation
Resides not in that man that does not think—
My wife is slippery? If thou wilt confess— [490
Or else be impudently negative,
To have nor eyes nor ears nor thought —then say
My wife's a hobby-horse; deserves a name
As rank as any flax-wench that puts to
Before her troth-plight: say't and justify't.
CAM. I would not be a stander-by, to hear [500
My sovereign mistress clouded so, without
My present vengeance taken: 'shrew my heart,
You never spoke what did become you less
Than this; which to reiterate were sin
As deep as that, though true.
LEON. Is whispering nothing?
Is leaning cheek to cheek? is meeting noses? [510
Kissing with inside lip? stopping the career
Of laughter with a sigh?—a note infallible

[7] hamstrings.

Of breaking honesty,—horsing foot on foot?
Skulking in corners? wishing clocks more swift?
Hours, minutes? noon, midnight? and all eyes [521
Blind with the pin and web but theirs, theirs only,
That would unseen be wicked? is this nothing?
Why, then the world and all that's in't is nothing;
The covering sky is nothing; Bohemia nothing;
My wife is nothing; nor nothing have these nothings, [531
If this be nothing.

CAM. Good my lord, be cured
Of this diseased opinion, and betimes;
For 'tis most dangerous.

LEON. Say it be, 'tis true.

CAM. No, no, my lord.

LEON. It is; you lie, you lie:
I say thou liest, Camillo, and I hate thee;
Pronounce thee a gross lout, a mind- [540
less slave,
Or else a hovering temporizer, that
Canst with thine eyes at once see good and evil,
Inclining to them both: were my wife's liver
Infected as her life, she would not live
The running of one glass.

CAM. Who does infect her?

LEON. Why, he that wears her like [550
her medal, hanging
About his neck, Bohemia, who, if I
Had servants true about me, that bare eyes
To see alike mine honor as their profits,
Their own particular thrifts, they would do that
Which should undo more doing: ay, and thou,
His cup-bearer—whom I from meaner form [561
Have benched and reared to worship, who mayst see
Plainly, as heaven sees earth, and earth sees heaven,
How I am gallëd—mightst bespice a cup,
To give mine enemy a lasting wink;
Which draught to me were cordial.

CAM. Sir, my lord,
I could do this, and that with no rash potion, [571
But with a lingering dram that should not work
Maliciously like poison; but I cannot
Believe this crack to be in my dread mistress,
So sovereignly being honorable.
I have loved thee—

LEON. Make that thy question, and go rot! [580
Dost think I am so muddy, so unsettled,
To appoint myself in this vexation; sully
The purity and whiteness of my sheets,
Which to preserve is sleep; which, being spotted,
Is goads, thorns, nettles, tails of wasps?
Give scandal to the blood o' the prince my son,
Who I do think is mine, and love as mine,
Without ripe moving to't? Would I do this? [591
Could man so blench?

CAM. I must believe you, sir:
I do; and will fetch off Bohemia for't;
Provided that, when he's removed, your highness
Will take again your queen as yours at first,
Even for your son's sake; and thereby for sealing [600
The injury of tongues in courts and kingdoms
Known and allied to yours.

LEON. Thou dost advise me
Even so as I mine own course have set down:
I'll give no blemish to her honor, none.

CAM. My lord,
Go then; and with a countenance as clear [610
As friendship wears at feasts, keep with Bohemia,
And with your queen. I am his cup-bearer;
If from me he have wholesome beverage,
Account me not your servant.

LEON. This is all:

Do't, and thou hast the one half of my heart;
Do't not, thou split'st thine own. [620
CAM. I'll do't, my lord.
LEON. I will seem friendly, as thou hast advised me. [*Exit.*
CAM. O miserable lady! But, for me,
What case stand I in? I must be the poisoner
Of good Polixenes; and my ground to do't
Is the obedience to a master, one [629
Who, in rebellion with himself, will have
All that are his so too. To do this deed
Promotion follows. If I could find example
Of thousands that had struck anointed kings,
And flourished after, I'd not do't; but, since
Nor brass nor stone nor parchment bears not one,
Let villany itself forswear't. I must [640
Forsake the court: to do't, or no, is certain
To me a break-neck. Happy star reign now!
Here comes Bohemia.

Re-enter POLIXENES.

POL. <This is strange: methinks
My favor here begins to warp. Not speak?>
Good day, Camillo. [650
CAM. Hail, most royal sir!
POL. What is the news i' th' court?
CAM. None rare, my lord.
POL. The king hath on him such a countenance
As he had lost some province and a region
Loved as he loves himself: even now I met him
With customary compliment, when he,
Wafting his eyes to th' contrary, [661 and falling
A lip of much contempt, speeds from me and
So leaves me to consider what is breeding
That changes thus his manners.
CAM. I dare not know, my lord.
POL. How! "dare not!" do not! Do you know, and dare not [669
Be intelligent[8] to me? 'Tis thereabouts;
For, to yourself, what you do know, you must,
And cannot say you dare not. Good Camillo,
Your changed complexions are to me a mirror
Which shows me mine changed too; for I must be
A party in this alteration, finding
Myself thus altered with't. [680
CAM. There is a sickness
Which puts some of us in distemper; but
I cannot name the disease, and it is caught
Of you that yet are well.
POL. How! caught of me?
Make me not sighted like the basilisk:
I have looked on thousands, who have sped the better [690
By my regard, but killed none so. Camillo,—
As you are certainly a gentleman, thereto
Clerk-like experienced, which no less adorns
Our gentry than our parents' noble names,
In whose success we are gentle—I beseech you,
If you know aught which does be- [700 hove my knowledge
Thereof to be informed, imprison it not
In ignorant concealment.
CAM. I may not answer.
POL. A sickness caught of me, and yet I well!
I must be answered. Dost thou hear, Camillo?
I conjure thee, by all the parts of man
Which honor does acknowledge—whereof the least [711
Is not this suit of mine—that thou declare
What incidency thou dost guess of harm
Is creeping toward me; how far off, how near;
Which way to be prevented if to be;
If not, how best to bear it.

[8] communicative.

CAM. Sir, I will tell you; [719
Since I am charged in honor and by him
That I think honorable. Therefore mark my counsel,
Which must be even as swiftly followed as
I mean to utter it, or both yourself and me
Cry "lost," and so good night!
POL. On, good Camillo.
CAM. I am appointed him to murder you. [730
POL. By whom, Camillo?
CAM. By the king.
POL. For what?
CAM. He thinks, nay, with all confidence he swears,
As he had seen't or been an instrument
To vice you to't, that you have touched his queen
Forbiddenly. [739
POL. O, then my best blood turn
To an infected jelly, and my name
Be yoked with his that did betray the best!
Turn then my freshest reputation to
A savor that may strike the dullest nostril
Where I arrive; and my approach be shunned,
Nay, hated too, worse than the great'st infection [750
That e'er was heard or read!
CAM. Swear his thought over
By each particular star in heaven and
By all their influences, you may as well
Forbid the sea for to obey the moon
As or by oath remove or counsel shake
The fabric of his folly, whose foundation
Is piled upon his faith, and will continue
The standing of his body.
POL. How should this grow? [760
CAM. I know not; but I am sure 'tis safer to
Avoid what's grown than question how 'tis born.
If, therefore, you dare trust my honesty,
That lies enclosëd in this trunk, which you
Shall bear along impawned, away tonight! [769
Your followers I will whisper to the business,
And will by twos and threes at several posterns
Clear them o' th' city. For myself, I'll put
My fortunes to your service, which are here
By this discovery lost. Be not uncertain;
For, by the honor of my parents, I
Have uttered truth, which, if you [780 seek to prove,
I dare not stand by; nor shall you be safer
Than one condemned by the king's own mouth, thereon
His execution sworn.
POL. I do believe thee:
I saw his heart in's face. Give me thy hand:
Be pilot to me and thy places shall [790
Still neighbor mine. My ships are ready and
My people did expect my hence departure
Two days ago. This jealousy
Is for a precious creature: as she's rare
Must it be great, and, as his person's mighty,
Must it be violent, and, as he does conceive [800
He is dishonored by a man which ever
Professed to him, why, his revenges must
In that be made more bitter. Fear o'ershades me:
Good expedition be my friend, and comfort
The gracious queen, part of his theme, but nothing
Of his ill-ta'en suspicion!—Come, Camillo; [810
I will respect thee as a father if
Thou bear'st my life off hence: let us avoid.
CAM. It is in mine authority to command
The keys of all the posterns: please your highness
To take the urgent hour. Come, sir, away! [*Exeunt.*

ACT TWO

Scene I

The next morning Hermione, *unaware of the departure of* Polixenes, *is with* Mamillius *and* Ladies *in a room in the palace.*

Her. Take the boy to you: he so troubles me,
'Tis past enduring.
1 Lady. Come, my gracious lord,
Shall I be your playfellow?
Mam. No, I'll none of you.
1 Lady. Why, my sweet lord?
Mam. You'll kiss me hard and speak to me as if
I were a baby still. [*To* Second Lady.] I love you better.
2 Lady. And why so, my lord?
Mam. Not for because
Your brows are blacker; yet black brows, they say,
Become some women best, so that there be not
Too much hair there, but in a semicircle,
Or a half-moon made with a pen.
2 Lady. Who taught [you] this?
Mam. I learned it out of women's faces. Pray now,
What color are your eyebrows?
1 Lady. Blue, my lord.
Mam. Nay, that's a mock: I have seen a lady's nose
That has been blue, but not her eyebrows.
1 Lady. Hark ye;
The queen your mother rounds apace: we shall
Present our services to a fine new prince
One of these days; and then you'd wanton with us,
If we would have you.
2 Lady. She is spread of late
Into a goodly bulk: good time encounter her!
Her. What wisdom stirs amongst you? Come sir, now
I am for you again: pray you, sit by us,
And tell's a tale.
Mam. Merry or sad shall't be?
Her. As merry as you will.
Mam. A sad tale's best for winter.
I have one of sprites and goblins.
Her. Let's have that, good sir.
Come on, sit down: come on, and do your best
To fright me with your sprites; you're powerful at it.
Mam. There was a man,—
Her. Nay, come, sit down; then on.
Mam. Dwelt by a churchyard. I will tell it softly;
Yond crickets shall not hear it.
Her. Come on then,
And give't me in mine ear.

Enter Leontes, Antigonus, Lords, *and Others.*

Leon. Was he met there? his train? Camillo with him?
1 Lord. Behind the tuft of pines I met them: never
Saw I men scour so on their way: I eyed them
Even to their ships.
Leon. How blest am I
In my just censure, in my true opinion!
Alack for lesser knowledge! How accursed
In being so blest! There may be in the cup
A spider steeped, and one may drink, depart,
And yet partake no venom, for his knowledge
Is not infected; but if one present
Th' abhorred ingredient to his eye, make known
How he hath drunk, he cracks his gorge, his sides,
With violent hefts.[1] I have drunk, and seen the spider.
Camillo was his help in this, his pandar:
There is a plot against my life, my crown;
All's true that is mistrusted: that false villain
Whom I employed was pre-employed by him:
He has discovered[2] my design, and I

[1] heavings.
[2] revealed.

Remain a pinched thing; yea, a very trick
For them to play at will.—How came the posterns
So easily open?
1 Lord. By his great authority;
Which often hath no less prevailed than so
On your command.
Leon. I know't too well.
[*To* Hermione.] Give me the boy: I am glad you did not nurse him:
Though he does bear some signs of me, yet you
Have too much blood in him.
Her. What is this? sport?
Leon. Bear the boy hence; he shall not come about her;
Away with him!—[*exit* Mamillius, *attended*] and let her sport herself
With that she's big with; for 'tis Polixenes
Has made thee swell thus.
Her. But I'd say he had not,
And I'll be sworn you would believe my saying,
Howe'er you lean to the nayward.
Leon. You, my lords,
Look on her, mark her well; be but about
To say, "she is a goodly lady," and
The justice of your hearts will thereto add
"'Tis pity she's not honest, honorable:"
Praise her but for this her without-door form—
Which, on my faith, deserves high speech—and straight
The shrug, the "hum" or "ha,"—these petty brands
That calumny doth use—O, I am out!—
That mercy does, for calumny will sear
Virtue itself:—these shrugs, these "hums" and "ha's,"
When you have said "she's goodly," come between,
Ere you can say "she's honest." But be't known,
From him that has most cause to grieve it should be,
She's an adult'ress.
Her. Should a villain say so,
The most replenished[3] villain in the world,
He were as much more villain: you, my lord,
Do but mistake.
Leon. You have mistook, my lady,
Polixenes for Leontes. O thou thing!
Which I'll not call a creature of thy place,
Lest barbarism, making me the precedent,
Should a like language use to all degrees,
And mannerly distinguishment leave out
Betwixt the prince and beggar.—I have said
She's an adult'ress; I have said with whom:
More, she's a traitor; and Camillo is
A federary with her, and one that knows,
What she should shame to know herself
But with her most vild principal, that she's
A bed-swerver, even as bad as those
That vulgars give bold'st titles; ay, and privy
To this their late escape.
Her. No, by my life,
Privy to none of this. How will this grieve you,
When you shall come to clearer knowledge, that
You thus have published me! Gentle my lord,
You scarce can right me throughly then to say
You did mistake.
Leon. No; if I mistake
In those foundations which I build upon,
The centre is not big enough to bear
A schoolboy's top.—Away with her to prison!
He who shall speak for her is afar off guilty
But that he speaks.
Her. There's some ill planet reigns:
I must be patient till the heavens look
With an aspéct more favorable.—Good my lords,
I am not prone to weeping, as our sex
Commonly are—the want of which vain dew

[3] perfect.

Perchance shall dry your pities—but I have
That honorable grief lodged here which burns
Worse than tears drown. Beseech you all, my lords,
With thoughts so qualified as your charities
Shall best instruct you, measure me;—and so
The king's will be performed!
LEON., *to the Guards.* Shall I be heard?
HER. Who is't that goes with me?—Beseech your highness
My women may be with me; for you see
My plight requires it.—Do not weep, good fools;
There is no cause: when you shall know your mistress
Has deserved prison, then abound in tears
As I come out: this action I now go on
Is for my better grace.—Adieu, my lord:
I never wished to see you sorry; now
I trust I shall.—My women, come; you have leave.
LEON. Go, do our bidding: hence!
[*Exeunt* QUEEN *guarded, and Ladies.*
1 LORD. Beseech your highness call the queen again.
ANT. Be certain what you do, sir, lest your justice
Prove violence: in the which three great ones suffer,
Yourself, your queen, your son.
1 LORD. For her, my lord,
I dare my life lay down and will do't, sir,
Please you t' accept it—that the queen is spotless
I' th' eyes of heaven and to you; I mean,
In this which you accuse her.
ANT. If it prove
She's otherwise, I'll keep my stables where
I lodge my wife; I'll go in couples with her;
Than when I feel and see her no further trust her;
For every inch of woman in the world,
Ay, every dram of woman's flesh is false,
If she be.
LEON. Hold your peaces!
1 LORD. Good my lord,—
ANT. It is for you we speak, not for ourselves.
You are abused, and by some putter-on
That will be damned for't; would I knew the villain,
I would land-damn him. Be she honor-flawed—
I have three daughters; the eldest is eleven,
The second and the third, nine and some five;
If this prove true, they'll pay for't; by mine honor,
I'll geld them all; fourteen they shall not see,
To bring false generations: they are co-heirs;
And I had rather glib myself than they
Should not produce fair issue.
LEON. Cease! no more.
You smell this business with a sense as cold
As is a dead man's nose; but I do see't and feel't,
As you feel doing thus, and see withal
The instruments that feel.
ANT. If it be so,
We need no grave to bury honesty:
There's not a grain of it the face to sweeten
Of the whole dungy earth.
LEON. What! lack I credit?
1 LORD. I had rather you did lack than I, my lord,
Upon this ground; and more it would content me
To have her honor true than your suspicion,
Be blamed for't how you might.
LEON. Why, what need we
Commune with you of this, but rather follow
Our forceful instigation? Our prerogative
Calls not your counsels, but our natural goodness
Imparts this; which if you—or stupefied
Or seeming so in skill—cannot or will not
Relish a truth like us, inform yourselves

We need no more of your advice: [302
the matter,
The loss, the gain, the ord'ring on't, is all
Properly ours.
ANT. And I wish, my liege,
You had only in your silent judgment tried it,
Without more overture.
LEON. How could that be? [310
Either thou art most ignorant by age,
Or thou wert born a fool. Camillo's flight,
Added to their familiarity—
Which was as gross as ever touched conjecture,
That lacked sight only, nought for approbation[4]
But only seeing, all other circumstances
Made up to the deed—doth push on this proceeding: [321
Yet, for a greater confirmatiön—
For in an act of this importance 'twere
Most piteous to be wild—I have dispatched in post
To sacred Delphos, to Apollo's temple,
Cleomenes and Dion, whom you know
Of stuffed sufficiency. Now, from the oracle
They will bring all; whose spiritual counsel had, [331
Shall stop or spur me. Have I done well?
1 LORD. Well done, my lord.
LEON. Though I am satisfied and need no more
Than what I know, yet shall the oracle
Give rest to th' minds of others, such as he
Whose ignorant credulity will not [340
Come up to th' truth. So have we thought it good
From our free person she should be confined,
Lest that the treachery of the two fled hence
Be left her to perform. Come, follow us:
We are to speak in public; for this business
Will raise us all. [350
ANT. <To laughter, as I take it,
If the good truth were known.>
[*Exeunt.*

[4] proof.

SCENE II

PAULINA, *a Gentleman, and Attendants are outside the gate of a prison—the prison to which* HERMIONE *has been committed. Some twenty-three days have elapsed.*

PAUL. The keeper of the prison, call to him;
Let him have knowledge who I am.—
[*The Gentleman passes through the gate.*] Good lady, [10
No court in Europe is too good for thee;
What dost thou then in prison?

Re-enter Gentlemen, with the GAOLER.

Now, good sir,
You know me, do you not?
GAOL. For a worthy lady
And one whom much I honor.
PAUL. Pray you then,
Conduct me to the queen.
GAOL. I may not, madam: to the contrary [21
I have express commandment.
PAUL. Here's ado,
To lock up honesty and honor from
Th' access of gentle visitors!—Is't lawful, pray you,
To see her women? any of them? Emilia?
GAOL. So please you, madam,
To put apart these your attendants, I
Shall bring Emilia forth. [30
PAUL. I pray now, call her.—
Withdraw yourselves. [*Exeunt Gentleman and Attendants.*
GAOL. And, madam,
I must be present at your conference.
PAUL. Well, be't so, prithee. [*The* GAOLER *returns into the prison.*
Here's such ado to make no stain a stain,
As passes coloring. [39

The GAOLER *brings* EMILIA *to the gate.*

Dear gentlewoman,
How fares our gracious lady?
EMIL. As well as one so great and so forlorn

May hold together. On her frights and griefs—
Which never tender lady hath borne greater—
She is something before her time delivered.
PAUL. A boy?
EMIL. A daughter; and a goodly babe,
Lusty and like to live: the queen receives
Much comfort in't; says, "My poor prisoner,
I am innocent as you."
PAUL. I dare be sworn:
These dangerous unsafe lunes i' th' king, beshrew them!
He must be told on't, and he shall: the office
Becomes a woman best; I'll take't upon me.
If I prove honey-mouthed, let my tongue blister,
And never to my red-looked anger be
The trumpet any more.—Pray you, Emilia,
Commend my best obedience to the queen:
If she dares trust me with her little babe,
I'll show it to the king and undertake to be
Her advocate to th' loud'st. We do not know
How he may soften at the sight o' th' child:
The silence often of pure innocence
Persuades when speaking fails.
EMIL. Most worthy madam,
Your honor and your goodness is so evident
That your free undertaking cannot miss
A thriving issue: there is no lady living
So meet for this great errand. Please your ladyship
To visit the next room, I'll presently
Acquaint the queen of your most noble offer,
Who but to-day hammered of this design,
But durst not tempt a minister of honor,
Lest she should be denied.
PAUL. Tell her, Emilia,
I'll use that tongue I have: if wit[5] flow from't
As boldness from my bosom, let it not be doubted
I shall do good.
EMIL. Now be you blest for it!
I'll to the queen. Please you, come something nearer.
GAOL. Madam, if't please the queen to send the babe,
I know not what I shall incur to pass it,
Having no warrant.
PAUL. You need not fear it, sir:
The child was prisoner to the womb, and is
By law and process of great nature thence
Freed and enfranchised; not a party to
The anger of the king, nor guilty of,
If any be, the trespass of the queen.
GAOL. I do believe it.
PAUL. Do not you fear: upon mine honor, I
Will stand betwixt you and danger.
[*Passes through the gate.*

SCENE III

The same day, LEONTES *is alone in a room in the palace.*

LEON. Nor night, nor day, no rest; it is but weakness
To bear the matter thus; mere weakness. If
The cause were not in being,—part o' the cause,
She the adultress; for the harlot king
Is quite beyond mine arm, out of the blank
And level of my brain, plot-proof; but she
I can hook to me: say that she were gone,
Given to the fire, a moiety of my rest
Might come to me again. [*Calling.*] Who's there?
1 SERV., *entering.* My lord?
LEON. How does the boy?
1 SERV. He took good rest to-night;
'Tis hoped his sickness is discharged.
LEON. To see his nobleness!

[5] wisdom.

Conceiving the dishonor of his mother,
He straight declined, drooped, took it deeply,
Fastened and fixed the shame on't in himself,
Threw off his spirit, his appetite, his sleep,
And downright languished. Leave me solely: go,
See how he fares. [*Exit* SERVANT.]—Fie, fie! no thought of him;
The very thought of my revenges that way
Recoil upon me: in himself too mighty,
And in his parties, his alliance; let him be
Until a time may serve: for present vengeance,
Take it on her. Camillo and Polixenes
Laugh at me; make their pastime at my sorrow:
They should not laugh, if I could reach them, nor
Shall she, within my power.

ANTIGONUS *and other* LORDS, *and Servants, who have been in attendance in an anteroom, appear in the entrance,* *vainly trying to keep out* PAULINA, *who is carrying an infant.*

I LORD. You must not enter.
PAUL. Nay, rather, good my lords, be second to me:
Fear you his tyrannous passion more, alas,
Than the queen's life? a gracious innocent soul,
More free than he is jealous.
ANT. That's enough.
2 SERV. Madam, he hath not slept to-night; commanded
None should come at him.
PAUL. Not so hot, good sir;
I come to bring him sleep. 'Tis such as you,
That creep like shadows by him and do sigh
At each his needless heavings, such as you
Nourish the cause of his awaking: I
Do come with words as medicinal as true,
Honest as either, to purge him of that humor
That presses him from sleep.
LEON. What noise there, ho?
PAUL. No noise, my lord; but needful conference
About some gossips for your highness.
LEON. How!
Away with that audacious lady! Antigonus,
I charged thee that she should not come about me:
I knew she would.
ANT. I told her so, my lord,
On your displeasure's peril, and on mine,
She should not visit you.
LEON. What! canst not rule her?
PAUL. From all dishonesty he can: in this,
Unless he take the course that you have done,
Commit me for committing honor, trust it,
He shall not rule me.
ANT. La you now! you hear;
When she will take the rein, I let her run;
But she'll not stumble.
PAUL. Good my liege, I come,
And I beseech you, hear me, who professes
Myself your loyal servant, your physician,
Your most obedient counsellor, yet that dares
Less appear so in comforting your evils
Than such as most seem yours: I say, I come
From your good queen.
LEON. Good queen!
PAUL. Good queen, my lord, good queen; I say, good queen;
And would by combat make her good, so were I
A man, the worst about you.
LEON. Force her hence!
PAUL. Let him that makes but trifles of his eyes
First hand me: on mine own accord I'll off;

But first I'll do my errand.—The good queen,
For she is good, hath brought you forth a daughter:
Here 'tis; commends it to your blessing.
[*Laying down the Child.*
LEON. Out!
A mánkind witch! Hence with her, [130 out o' door:
A most intelligencing bawd!
PAUL. Not so;
I am as ignorant in that as you
In so entitling me, and no less honest
Than you are mad; which is enough, I'll warrant,
As this world goes, to pass for honest.
LEON. Traitors!
Will you not push her out? Give [140 her the bastard.
[*To* ANTIGONUS.] Thou dotard! thou art woman-tired, unroosted
By thy dame Partlet here. Take up the bastard;
Take't up, I say; give't to thy crone.
PAUL. For ever
Unvenerable be thy hands, if thou
Tak'st up the princess by that forcëd baseness [150
Which he has put upon't!
LEON., *derisively*. He dreads his wife!
PAUL. So I would you did; then, 'twere past all doubt,
You'd call your children yours.
LEON. A nest of traitors!
ANT. I am none, by this good light.
PAUL. Nor I; nor any
But one that's here, and that's himself; for he [160
The sacred honor of himself, his queen's,
His hopeful son's, his babe's, betrays to slander,
Whose sting is sharper than the sword's; and will not—
For, as the case now stands, it is a curse
He cannot be compelled to't—once remove
The root of his opinion, which is rotten
As ever oak or stone was sound. [170
LEON. A callat
Of boundless tongue, who late hath beat her husband
And now baits me!—This brat is none of mine;
It is the issue of Polixenes:
Hence with it; and, together with the dam,
Commit them to the fire!
PAUL. It is yours; [180
And, might we lay th' old proverb to your charge,
"So like you, 'tis the worse."—Behold, my lords,
Although the print be little, the whole matter
And copy of the father; eye, nose, lip,
The trick of's frown, his forehead, nay, the valley, [189
The pretty dimples of his chin and cheek, his smiles,
The very mold and frame of hand, nail, finger.—
And thou, good goddess Nature, which hast made it
So like to him that got it, if thou hast
The ordering of the mind too, 'mongst all colors
No yellow in't; lest she suspect, as he does, [200
Her children not her husband's.
LEON. A gross hag!
And, lozel, thou art worthy to be hanged,
That wilt not stay her tongue.
ANT. Hang all the husbands
That cannot do that feat, you'll leave yourself
Hardly one subject.
LEON. Once more, take her hence. [210
PAUL. A most unworthy and unnatural lord
Can do no more.
LEON. I'll ha' thee burned.
PAUL. I care not:
It is a heretic that makes the fire,
Not she which burns in't. I'll not call you tyrant;
But this most cruel usage of your queen—
Not able to produce more accusation [220
Than your own weak-hinged fancy—something savors
Of tyranny, and will ignoble make you,
Yea, scandalous to the world.

LEON. On your allegiance,
Out of the chamber with her! Were I a tyrant,
Where were her life? she durst not call me so
If she did know me one. Away with her!
[ANTIGONUS *and the servants proceed to shove her out.*
PAUL. I pray you do not push me; I'll be gone.—
Look to your babe, my lord; 'tis yours. Jove send her
A better-guiding spirit!—What needs these hands?
You, that are thus so tender o'er his follies,
Will never do him good, not one of you.—
So, so! farewell; we are gone. [*Exit.*
LEON. Thou, traitor, hast set on thy wife to this.
My child! away with't!—even thou, that hast
A heart so tender o'er it, take it hence
And see it instantly consumed with fire:
Even thou, and none but thou. Take it up straight:
Within this hour bring me word 'tis done—
And by good testimony—or I'll seize thy life,
With what thou else call'st thine. If thou refuse
And wilt encounter with my wrath, say so;
The bastard brains with these my proper hands
Shall I dash out. Go, take it to the fire;
For thou sett'st on thy wife.
ANT. I did not, sir:
These lords, my noble fellows, if they please,
Can clear me in't.
LORDS. We can, my royal liege;
He is not guilty of her coming hither.
LEON. You're liars all.
1 LORD. Beseech your highness, give us better credit:
We have always truly served you, and beseech [you]
So to esteem of us; and on our knees we beg,
As recompense of our dear services
Past and to come, that you do change this purpose,
Which, being so horrible, so bloody, must
Lead on to some foul issue. We all kneel.
LEON. I am a feather for each wind that blows.
Shall I live on to see this bastard kneel
And call me father? Better burn it now
Than curse it then. But, be it; let it live:
It shall not neither.—[*To* ANTIGONUS.] You, sir, come you hither;
You that have been so tenderly officious
With Lady Margery, your midwife there,
To save this bastard's life—for 'tis a bastard,
So sure as this beard's grey—what will you adventure
To save this brat's life?
ANT. Anything, my lord,
That my ability may undergo,
And nobleness impose: at least, thus much:
I'll pawn the little blood which I have left,
To save the innocent: any thing possible.
LEON. It shall be possible. Swear by this sword
Thou wilt perform my bidding.
ANT. I will, my lord.
LEON. Mark and perform it, seest thou, for the fail
Of any point in't shall not only be
Death to thyself, but to thy lewd-tongued wife,
Whom for this time we pardon. We enjoin thee,
As thou art liegeman to us, that thou carry
This female bastard hence; and that thou bear it
To some remote and desert place quite out
Of our dominions; and that there thou leave it,
Without more mercy, to it[6] own protection
And favor of the climate. As by strange fortune

[6] its.

It came to us, I do in justice charge thee,
On thy soul's peril and thy body's torture,
That thou commend it strangely to [330 some place,
Where chance may nurse or end it. Take it up.

ANT. I swear to do this, though a present death
Had been more merciful.—Come on, poor babe:
Some powerful spirit instruct the kites and ravens
To be thy nurses! Wolves and bears, [340 they say,
Casting their savageness aside, have done
Like offices of pity.—Sir, be prosperous
In more than this deed doth require!—And blessing
Against this cruelty fight on thy side,
Poor thing, condemned to loss! [*Exit with the Child.*

LEON. No; I'll not rear
Another's issue. [350

Enter a SERVANT.

SERV. Please your highness, posts
From those you sent to th' oracle are come
An hour since: Cleomenes and Dion,
Being well arrived from Delphos, are both landed,
Hasting to th' court.

1 LORD. So please you, sir, their speed
Hath been beyond account. [360

LEON. Twenty-three days
They have been absent: 'tis good speed; foretells
The great Apollo suddenly will have
The truth of this appear. Prepare you, lords;
Summon a session, that we may arraign
Our most disloyal lady; for, as she hath
Been publicly accused, so shall she have
A just and open trial. While she lives
My heart will be a burden to me. Leave me, [372
And think upon my bidding. [*All go out, except* LEONTES.

ACT THREE

SCENE I

CLEOMENES *and* DION *are new arrived at a Sicilian seaport, and are about to post off to the capital. The scene is, therefore, a little earlier than the one immediately preceding.*

CLEO. The climate's delicate, the air most sweet,
Fertile the isle, the temple much surpassing
The common praise it bears. [10

DION. I shall report,
For most it caught me, the celestial habits—
Methinks I so should term them—and the reverence
Of the grave wearers. O, the sacrifice!
How ceremonious, solemn, and unearthly
It was i' th' off'ring!

CLEO. But, of all, the burst [19
And the ear-deaf'ning voice o' th' oracle,
Kin to Jove's thunder, so surprised my sense,
That I was nothing.

DION. If th' event o' th' journey
Prove as successful to the queen—O, be't so!—
As it hath been to us rare, pleasant, speedy,
The time is worth the use on't.

CLEO. Great Apollo [30
Turn all to th' best! These proclamatiöns,
So forcing faults upon Hermione,
I little like.

DION. The violent carriage of it
Will clear or end the business: when the oracle,
Thus by Apollo's great divine sealed up,
Shall the contents discover, something rare [40
Even then will rush to knowledge.—Go: fresh horses!
And gracious be the issue! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

The next day, LEONTES, *with* LORDS *and* OFFICERS *about him, is conducting a court of justice, which is to try* HERMIONE.

LEON. This sessions, to our great grief we pronounce,
Even pushes 'gainst our heart: the party tried,
The daughter of a king, our wife, and one
Of us too much beloved. Let us be cleared
Of being tyrannous, since we so openly
Proceed in justice, which shall have due course,
Even to the guilt or the purgation.
Produce the prisoner.

OFFI. It is his highness' pleasure that the queen
Appear in person here in court.

There is silence for a few moments, and then the QUEEN *enters guarded,* PAULINA *and Ladies attending.*

LEON. Read the indictment.

OFFI. "Hermione, queen to the worthy Leontes, King of Sicilia, thou art here accused and arraigned of high treason, in committing adultery with Polixenes, King of Bohemia, and conspiring with Camillo to take away the life of our sovereign lord the king, thy royal husband: the pretence [1] whereof being by circumstances partly laid open, thou, Hermione, contrary to the faith and allegiance of a true subject, didst counsel and aid them, for their better safety, to fly away by night."

HER. Since what I am to say must be but that
Which contradicts my accusation, and
The testimony of my part no other
But what comes from myself, it shall scarce boot me
To say, "Not guilty:" mine integrity
Being counted falsehood, shall, as I express it,
Be so received. But thus: if pow'rs divine
Behold our human actions, as they do,
I doubt not then but innocence shall make
False accusation blush, and tyranny
Tremble at patience.—You, my lord, best know—
Who least will seem to do so—my past life
Hath been as continent, as chaste, as true,
As I am now unhappy; which is more
Than history can pattern, though devised
And played to take spectators; for behold me,
A fellow of the royal bed, which owe [2]
A moi'ty of the throne, a great king's daughter,
The mother to a hopeful prince, here standing
To prate and talk for life and honor fore
Who please to come and hear. For life, I prize it
As I weigh grief, which I would spare: for honor,
'Tis a derivative from me to mine,
And only that I stand for. I appeal
To your own conscience, sir, before Polixenes
Came to your court, how I was in your grace,
How merited to be so; since he came,
With what encounter so uncurrent [3] I
Have strained, t' appear thus: if one jot beyond
The bound of honor, or in act or will
That way inclining, hardened be the hearts
Of all that hear me, and my near'st of kin
Cry "fie" upon my grave!

LEON. I ne'er heard yet
That any of these bolder vices wanted
Less impudence to gáinsay what they did
Than to perform it first.

HER. That's true enough;
Though 'tis a saying, sir, not due [4] to me.

LEON. You will not own it.

HER. More than mistress of
Which comes to me in name of fault, I must not
At all acknowledge. For Polixenes,
With whom I am accused, I do confess
I loved him as in honor he required,[5]
With such a kind of love as might become

[1] intention.
[2] own.
[3] improper.
[4] applicable.
[5] merited.

A lady like me; with a love even such,
So and no other, as yourself commanded;
Which not to have done I think had been in me
Both disobedience and ingratitude
To you and toward your friend, whose love had spoke,
Even since it could speak, from an infant, freely,
That it was yours. Now, for conspiracy,
I know not how it tastes, though it be dished
For me to try how: all I know of it
Is that Camillo was an honest man;
And why he left your court the gods themselves,
Wotting no more than I, are ignorant.

LEON. You knew of his departure, as you know
What you have underta'en to do in's absence.

HER. Sir,
You speak a language that I understand not:
My life stands in the level of your dreams,
Which I'll lay down.

LEON. Your actions are my dreams:
You had a bastard by Polixenes,
And I but dreamed it. As you were past all shame—
Those of your fact are so—so past all truth;
Which to deny concerns more than avails; for, as
Thy brat hath been cast out, like to itself,
No father owning it—which is, indeed,
More criminal in thee than it—so thou
Shalt feel our justice, in whose easiest passage
Look for no less than death.

HER. Sir, spare your threats:
The bug[6] which you would fright me with I seek.
To me can life be no commodity:[7]
The crown and comfort of my life, your favor,
I do give lost; for I do feel it gone,
But know not how it went. My second joy,
And first-fruits of my body, from his presence
I am barred, like one infectious. My third comfort,
Starred most unluckily, is from my breast,
The innocent milk in it[8] most innocent mouth,
Haled out to murder: myself on every post
Proclaimed a strumpet: with immodest hatred
The child-bed privilege denied, which longs
To women of all fashion: lastly, hurried
Here to this place, i' th' open air, before
I have got strength of limit. Now, my liege,
Tell me what blessings I have here alive,
That I should fear to die.—Therefore proceed;
But yet hear this—mistake me not—for life,[9]
I prize it not a straw; but, for mine honor,
Which I would free, if I shall be condemned
Upon surmises, all proofs sleeping else
But what your jealousies awake, I tell you
'Tis rigor and not law.—Your honors all,
I do refer me to the oracle:
Apollo be my judge!

1 LORD. This your request
Is altogether just: therefore, bring forth,
And in Apollo's name, his oracle.

Exeunt certain OFFICERS.

HER. The Emperor of Russia was my father:
O! that he were alive, and here beholding
His daughter's trial; that he did but see
The flatness of my misery; yet with eyes
Of pity, not revenge!

Re-enter OFFICERS, *with* CLEOMENES *and* DION.

OFFI. You here shall swear upon this sword of justice,
That you, Cleomenes and Dion, have

[6] terror.
[7] advantage.
[8] its.
[9] B, "no life," which may be right, if followed by a colon.

Been both at Delphos, and from thence have brought
This sealed-up oracle, by the hand delivered
Of great Apollo's priest, and that since then
You have not dared to break the holy seal,
Nor read the secrets in't.

CLEO AND DION. All this we swear.

LEON. Break up the seals, and read.

OFFI. "Hermione is chaste; Polixenes, blameless; Camillo, a true subject; Leontes a jealous tyrant; his innocent babe, truly begotten; and the king shall live without an heir if that which is lost be not found!"

LORDS. Now blessëd be the great Apollo!

HER. Praised!

LEON. Hast thou read truth?

OFFI. Ay, my lord; even so
As it is here set down.

LEON. There is no truth at all i' th' oracle:
The sessions shall proceed: this is mere falsehood.

Enter a SERVANT.

SER. My lord the king, the king!

LEON. What is the business?

SER. O sir! I shall be hated to report it:
The prince your son, with mere conceit and fear
Of the queen's speed,[10] is gone.

LEON. How gone?

SER. Is dead.

LEON. Apollo's angry; and the heavens themselves
Do strike at my injustice. [HERMIONE *swoons.*] How now, there!

PAUL. This news is mortal to the queen: look down,
And see what death is doing.

LEON. Take her hence:
Her heart is but o'ercharged; she will recover.—
I have too much believed mine own suspicion.—
Beseech you, tenderly apply to her
Some remedies for life.— [*Exeunt* PAULINA, *and Ladies, with* HERMIONE.
Apollo, pardon
My great profaneness 'gainst thine oracle!
I'll reconcile me to Polixenes,
New-woo my queen, recall the good Camillo,
Whom I proclaim a man of truth, of mercy;
For, being transported by my jealousies
To bloody thoughts and to revenge, I chose
Camillo for the minister to poison
My friend Polixenes; which had been done,
But that the good mind of Camillo tardied
My swift command; though I with death and with
Reward did threaten and encourage him,
Not doing't, and being done: he, most humane
And filled with honor, to my kingly guest
Unclasped my practice, quit his fortunes here,
Which you knew great, and to the certain[11] hazard
Of all incertainties himself commended,
No richer than his honor: how he glisters
Through my rust! and how his piety
Does my deeds make the blacker!

Re-enter PAULINA.

PAUL. Woe the while!
O, cut my lace, lest my heart, cracking it,
Break too!

1 LORD. What fit is this, good lady?

PAUL. What studied torments, tyrant, hast for me?
What wheels? racks? fires? What flaying? boiling
In lead, or oil?[12] what old or newer torture
Must I receive, whose every word deserves
To taste of thy most worst? Thy tyranny,

[10] fortune.

[11] not in F1.

[12] B, in leads or oils.

Together working with thy jealousies,
Fancies too weak for boys, too green [300
and idle
For girls of nine—O! think what they
have done,
And then run mad indeed, stark mad; for all
Thy by-gone fooleries were but spices of it.
That thou betray'dst Polixenes, 'twas nothing;
That did but show thee of a fool, [310
inconstant
And damnable ingrateful; nor was't much
Thou wouldst have poisoned good Camillo's honor,
To have him kill a king; poor trespasses,
More monstrous standing by; whereof I reckon
The casting forth to crows thy baby daughter [319
To be or none or little; though a devil
Would have shed water out of fire ere done't:
Nor is't directly laid to thee, the death
Of the young prince, whose honorable thoughts—
Thoughts high for one so tender—cleft the heart
That could conceive a gross and foolish sire
Blemished his gracious dam: this is [330
not, no,
Laid to thy answer; but the last—O lords!
When I have said, cry "woe!"—the queen, the queen,
The sweet'st, dearest creature's dead, and vengeance for't
Not dropped down yet.

1 Lord. The higher pow'rs forbid!

Paul. I'll say she's dead; I'll [340
swear't: if word nor oath
Prevail not, go and see: if you can bring
Tincture[13] or lustre in her lip, her eye,
Heat outwardly, or breath within, I'll serve you
As I would do the gods.—But, O thou tyrant!
Do not repent these things, for they are heavier
Than all thy woes can stir; therefore [350
betake thee
To nothing but despair. A thousand knees
Ten thousand years together, naked, fasting,
Upon a barrèn mountain, and still winter
In storm perpetual, could not move the gods
To look that way thou wert.

Leon. Go on, go on; [360
Thou canst not speak too much: I have deserved
All tongues to talk their bitt'rest.

1 Lord. Say no more:
Howe'er the business goes, you have made fault
I' th' boldness of your speech.

Paul. I am sorry for't:
All faults I make, when I shall come to know them, [370
I do repent. Alas! I have showed too much
The rashness of a woman: he is touched
To th' noble heart.—What's gone and what's past help
Should be past grief: do not receive affliction
At my petition; I beseech you, rather
Let me be punished, that have minded you [380
Of what you should forget. Now, good my liege,
Sir, royal sir, forgive a foolish woman:
The love I bore your queen—lo, fool again!—
I'll speak of her no more, nor of your children;
I'll not remember you of my own lord,
Who is lost too: take your patience to you, [390
And I'll say nothing.

Leon. Thou didst speak but well,
When most the truth, which I receive much better
Than to be pitied of thee. Prithee, bring me
To the dead bodies of my queen and son:
One grave shall be for both: upon them shall [399
The causes of their death appear, unto

[13] color.

Our shame perpetual. Once a day I'll visit
The chapel where they lie, and tears shed there
Shall be my recreation: so long as nature
Will bear up with this exercise, so long
I daily vow to use it. Come and lead me
Unto these sorrows. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III

Some days later Antigonus, *with the babe, has landed upon the shore of a desert region which, in the Shakespearean geography, forms part of the kingdom of Bohemia. The* Mariner *who is master of the bark that has brought him from Sicilia has landed with him, and they have walked a little distance inland.*

Ant. Thou art perfect, then, our ship hath touched upon [10
The deserts of Bohemia?
Mar. Ay, my lord; and fear
We have landed in ill time: the skies look grimly
And threaten present blusters. In my conscience,
The heavens with that we have in hand are angry,
And frown upon's.
Ant. Their sacred wills be done! Go, get aboard; [21
Look to thy bark: I'll not be long before
I call upon thee.
Mar. Make your best haste, and go not
Too far i' th' land: 'tis like to be loud weather;
Besides, this place is famous for the creatures
Of prey that keep upon't. [30
Ant. Go thou away:
I'll follow instantly.
Mar. I am glad at heart
To be so rid o' th' business. [*Exit.*
Ant. Come, poor babe:
I have heard, but not believed, the spirits o' th' dead
May walk again: if such thing be, thy mother
Appeared to me last night, for ne'er was dream [41
So like a waking. To me comes a creature,
Sometimes her head on one side, some another;
I never saw a vessel of like sorrow,
So filled and so becoming: in pure white robes,
Like very sanctity, she did approach
My cabin where I lay; thrice bowed before me, [51
And, gasping to begin some speech, her eyes
Became two spouts: the fury spent, anon
Did this break from her: "Good Antigonus,
Since fate, against thy better disposition,
Hath made thy person for the thrower-out [59
Of my poor babe, according to thine oath,
Places remote enough are in Bohemia;
There weep and leave it crying; and, for the babe
Is counted lost for ever, Perdita,
I prithee, call't: for this ungentle business,
Put on thee by my lord, thou ne'er shalt see
Thy wife Paulina more:" and so, with shrieks, [70
She melted into air. Affrighted much,
I did in time collect myself, and thought
This was so and no slumber. Dreams are toys;
Yet for this once, yea, superstitiously,
I will be squared [14] by this. I do believe
Hermione hath suffered death; and that
Apollo would, this being indeed the issue
Of King Polixenes, it should here be laid,
Either for life or death, upon the earth [80
Of its right father. Blossom, speed thee well! [*Laying down Child.*
There lie; and there thy character: there these; [*Laying down a bundle.*
Which may, if fortune please, both breed thee, pretty,
And still rest thine. The storm begins: poor wretch!
That for thy mother's fault art thus exposed [90
To loss and what may follow. Weep I cannot;

[14] governed.

But my heart bleeds, and most accursed am I
To be by oath enjoined to this. Farewell!
The day frowns more and more: thou'rt like to have
A lullaby too rough. I never saw [99
The heavens so dim by day. [*Hearing a noise of hunting.*] A savage clamor!
Well may I get aboard! [*Seeing a hunted bear approach.*] This is the chase:
I am gone for ever. [*Exit, pursued by the bear.*

Enter a Shepherd.

Shep. I would there were no age between ten[15] and three-and-twenty, or that youth would sleep out the rest; [110 for there is nothing in the between but getting wenches with child, wronging the ancientry, stealing, fighting. Hark you now! Would any but these boiled brains of nineteen and two-and-twenty hunt this weather? They have scared away two of my best sheep; which I fear the wolf will sooner find than the master: if anywhere I have them, 'tis by the sea-side, [119 browsing of ivy. [*Seeing the infant.*] Good luck, an't be thy will! what have we here? [*Taking up the Child.*] Mercy on's, a barne;[16] a very pretty barne! A boy or a child,[17] I wonder? A pretty one, a very pretty one! Sure some scape: though I am not bookish, yet I can read waiting-gentlewoman in the scape. This has been some stair-work, some trunk-work, some behind-door-work; they were warmer that got this than the poor [130 thing is here. I'll take it up for pity; yet I'll tarry till my son come; he hollaed but even now. [*Calling.*] Whoa, ho, hoa!

Enter Clown.

Clo. Hilloa, loa!

Shep. What! art so near? If thou'lt see a thing to talk on when thou art dead and rotten, come hither. What ailest thou, man? [139

Clo. I have seen two such sights by sea and by land! but I am not to say it is a sea, for it is now the sky: betwixt the firmament and it you cannot thrust a bodkin's point.

Shep. Why, boy, how is it?

Clo. I would you did but see how it chafes, how it rages, how it takes up the shore! but that's not to the point. O! the most piteous cry of the poor souls; sometimes to see 'em, and not to see [150 'em; now the ship boring the moon with her mainmast, and anon swallowed with yest and froth, as you'd thrust a cork into a hogshead. And then for the land-service: to see how the bear tore out his shoulder-bone; how he cried to me for help and said his name was Antigonus, a nobleman. But to make an end of the ship: to see how the sea flap-dragoned it: but, first, how the poor souls roared, and [160 the sea mocked them; and how the poor gentleman roared, and the bear mocked him, both roaring louder than the sea or weather.

Shep. Name of mercy! when was this, boy?

Clo. Now, now; I have not winked since I saw these sights: the men are not yet cold under water, nor the bear half dined on the gentleman: he's at it now.

Shep. Would I had been by, to [171 have helped the old man!

Clo. I would you had been by the ship's side, to have helped her: there your charity would have lacked footing.

Shep. Heavy matters! heavy matters! but look thee here, boy. Now bless thyself: thou mettest with things dying, I with things new born. Here's a sight for thee; look thee, a bearing-cloth for a [180 squire's child! Look thee here: take up, take up, boy; open't. So, let's see: it was told me, I should be rich by the fairies: this is some changeling.—Open't. [Clown *opens the bundle.*] What's within, boy?

Clo. You're a made old man: if the sins of your youth are forgiven you, you're well to live. Gold; all gold!

[15] May be, as generally regarded, a mistake for "sixteen."
[16] bairn.
[17] Still used in parts of England distinctively for a female child.

SHEP. This is fairy gold, boy, and 'twill prove so: up with't, keep it close: [190 home, home, the next way. We are lucky, boy; and to be so still requires nothing but secrecy. Let my sheep go. Come, good boy, the next way home.

CLO. Go you the next way with your findings. I'll go see if the bear be gone from the gentleman, and how much he hath eaten: they are never curst but when they are hungry. If there be any of him left, I'll bury it. [200

SHEP. That's a good deed. If thou mayst discern by that which is left of him what he is, fetch me to the sight of him.

CLO. Marry, will I; and you shall help to put him i' the ground.

SHEP. 'Tis a lucky day, boy, and we'll do good deeds on't. [*Exeunt.*

ACT FOUR

Enter TIME, *as Chorus.*

TIME. I, that please some, try all, both joy and terror
Of good and bad, that makes and unfolds error,
Now take upon me, in the name of Time,
To use my wings. Impute it not a crime
To me or my swift passage, that I slide
O'er sixteen years, and leave the growth untried [10
Of that wide gap; since it is in my pow'r
To o'erthrow law, and in one self-born hour
To plant and o'erwhelm custom. Let me pass
The same I am, ere ancient'st order was
Or what is now received: I witness to
The times that brought them in; so shall I do [19
To th' freshest things now reigning, and make stale
The glistering of this present, as my tale
Now seems to it. Your patience this allowing,
I turn my glass and give my scene such growing
As you had slept between. Leontes leaving—
Th' effects of his fond jealousies so grieving [30
That he shuts up himself—imagine me,
Gentle spectators, that I now may be
In fair Bohemia; and remember well,
I mentioned a son o' th' king's, which Florizel
I now name to you; and with speed so pace
To speak of Perdita, now grown in grace
Equal with wond'ring: what of her ensues
I list not prophesy; but let Time's news
Be known when 'tis brought forth. A [41 shepherd's daughter,
And what to her adheres, which follows after,
Is th' argument of Time. Of this allow,
If ever you have spent time worse ere now:
If never, yet that Time himself doth say
He wishes earnestly you never may.
[*Exit.* [50

SCENE I

POLIXENES *has noted that his son* FLORIZEL *has taken to absenting himself from the Court of Bohemia. He unfolds his fears to* CAMILLO, *who has been asking for permission to return to Sicilia,* LEONTES *having (somewhat tardily) invited him to come back.*

POL. I pray thee, good Camillo, be no more importunate: 'tis a sickness denying thee anything; a death to grant this. [10

CAM. It is fifteen[1] years since I saw my country: though I have for the most part been aired abroad, I desire to lay my bones there. Besides, the penitent king, my master, hath sent for me; to whose feeling sorrows I might be some allay, or I o'erween to think so, which is another spur to my departure.

POL. As thou lovest me, Camillo, wipe not out the rest of thy services by [20 leaving me now. The need I have of thee thine own goodness hath made: better not to have had thee than thus to want thee. Thou, having made me businesses which none without thee can sufficiently manage, must either stay to execute them thyself or take away with thee the very

[1] Time and Camillo are not consistent.

services thou hast done; which if I have not enough considered—as too much I [29 cannot—to be more thankful to thee shall be my study, and my profit therein the heaping friendships. Of that fatal country, Sicilia, prithee speak no more, whose very naming punishes me with the remembrance of that penitent, as thou callest him, and reconciled king, my brother; whose loss of his most precious queen and children are even now to be afresh lamented. Say to me, when sawest thou the Prince Florizel, my son? Kings are [40 no less unhappy, their issue not being gracious, than they are in losing them when they have approved[2] their virtues.

CAM. Sir, it is three days since I saw the prince. What his happier affairs may be, are to me unknown; but I have missingly[3] noted he is of late much retired from court, and is less frequent to his princely exercises than formerly he hath appeared. [50

POL. I have considered so much, Camillo, and with some care; so far, that I have eyes under my service which look upon his removedness; from whom I have this intelligence, that he is seldom from the house of a most homely shepherd; a man, they say, that from very nothing, and beyond the imagination of his neighbors, is grown into an unspeakable estate.

CAM. I have heard, sir, of such a [60 man, who hath a daughter of most rare note: the report of her is extended more than can be thought to begin from such a cottage.

POL. That's likewise part of my intelligence; but, I fear, the angle that plucks our son thither. Thou shalt accompany us to the place; where we will, not appearing what we are, have some question with the shepherd; from whose sim- [70 plicity I think it not uneasy[4] to get the cause of my son's resort thither. Prithee, be my present partner in this business, and lay aside the thoughts of Sicilia.

CAM. I willingly obey your command.

POL. My best Camillo!—We must disguise ourselves. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

Along a road near the SHEPHERD'S *cottage that merry rogue* AUTOLYCUS *passes, singing.*

AUT.

When daffodils begin to peer,
With heigh! the doxy, over the dale,
Why, then comes in the sweet o' the year;
For the red blood reigns in the winter's pale.

The white sheet bleaching on the hedge, [10
With heigh! the sweet birds, O, how they sing!
Doth set my pugging[5] tooth on edge;
For a quart of ale is a dish for a king.

The lark, that tirra-lirra chants,
With, heigh! with, heigh! the thrush and the jay,
Are summer songs for me and my aunts,[6]
While we lie tumbling in the hay. [19

I have served Prince Florizel, and in my time wore three-pile; but now I am out of service:

[*Singing.*]

But shall I go mourn for that, my dear?
The pale moon shines by night;
And, when I wander here and there,
I then do most go right.

If tinkers may have leave to live,
And bear the sow-skin budget,
Then my account I well may give, [30
And in the stocks avouch it.

My traffic is sheets; when the kite builds, look to lesser linen. My father named me Autolycus; who, being, as I am, littered under Mercury, was likewise a snapper-up of unconsidered trifles. With die and drab I purchased this caparison; and my revenue is the silly cheat. Gallows and knock are too powerful on the highway: beating and hanging are ter- [40 rors to me: for the life to come, I sleep out the thought of it. A prize! a prize!

[2] proved.
[3] If this word be right, it must mean "by missing him." Dr. Tannenbaum suggests the substitution "wittingly." The phrase may then mean, "I have made a point of noting that he is, etc."
[4] difficult.
[5] thriving.
[6] wenches.

Enter CLOWN.

CLO. Let me see: every 'leven wether tods; every tod yields pound and odd shilling: fifteen hundred shorn, what comes the wool to?

AUT. <If the springe[7] hold, the cock's mine.> [49

CLO. I cannot do't without compters. Let me see; what am I to buy for our sheep-shearing feast? Three pound of sugar; five pound of currants; rice. What will this sister of mine do with rice? But my father hath made her mistress of the feast; and she lays it on. She hath made me four-and-twenty nosegays for the shearers, three-man song-men all, and very good ones; but they are most of them means and bases: but one puri- [60 tan amongst them, and he sings psalms to hornpipes. I must have saffron, to color the warden pies; mace; dates, none (that's out of my note); nutmegs, seven; a race or two of ginger (but that I may beg); four pound of prunes; and as many of raisins o' the sun.

[AUTOLYCUS, *concluding that the* CLOWN *is natural prey, resorts to the beggars' trick of feigning to have been robbed. He throws himself on* [71 *the ground.*

AUT. O! that ever I was born!

CLO. I' th' name of me—

AUT. O! help me, help me! pluck but off these rags, and then death, death!

CLO. Alack, poor soul! thou hast need of more rags to lay on thee, rather than have these off. [79

AUT. O, sir! the loathsomeness of them offends me more than the stripes I have received, which are mighty ones and millions.

CLO. Alas, poor man! a million of beating may come to a great matter.

AUT. I am robbed, sir, and beaten; my money and apparel ta'en from me, and these detestable things put upon me.

CLO. What, by a horseman or a footman? [90

AUT. A footman, sweet sir, a footman.

CLO. Indeed, he should be a footman, by the garments he hath left with thee: if this be a horseman's coat, it hath seen very hot service. Lend me thy hand, I'll help thee: come, lend me thy hand.

[*Helps him up.*

AUT. O! good sir, tenderly, O!

CLO. Alas, poor soul! [99

AUT. O! good sir; softly, good sir! I fear, sir, my shoulder-blade is out.

CLO. How now! canst stand?

AUT. Softly, dear sir; [*picking his pocket*] good sir, softly. You ha' done me a charitable office.

CLO. Dost lack any money? I have a little money for thee.

AUT. No, good, sweet sir: no, I beseech you, sir. I have a kinsman not past [109 three-quarters of a mile hence, unto whom I was going: I shall there have money, or anything I want: offer me no money, I pray you! that kills my heart.

CLO. What manner of fellow was he that robbed you?

AUT. A fellow, sir, that I have known to go about with troll-my-dames: I knew him once a servant of the prince. I cannot tell, good sir, for which of his virtues it was, but he was certainly whipped out of the court. [121

CLO. His vices, you would say: there's no virtue whipped out of the court: they cherish it, to make it stay there, and yet it will no more but abide.

AUT. Vices, I would say, sir. I know this man well: he hath been since an ape-bearer; then a process-server, a bailiff; then he compassed a motion of the [129 Prodigal Son, and married a tinker's wife within a mile where my land and living lies; and, having flown over many knavish professions, he settled only in rogue: some call him Autolycus.

CLO. Out upon him! Prig,[8] for my life, prig: he haunts wakes, fairs, and bear-baitings.

AUT. Very true, sir; he, sir, he: that's the rogue that put me into this apparel.

CLO. Not a more cowardly rogue in [140 all Bohemia: if you had but looked big and spit at him, he'd have run.

AUT. I must confess to you, sir, I am

[7] snare.

[8] thief.

no fighter: I am false of heart that way, and that he knew, I warrant him.

CLO. How do you now?

AUT. Sweet sir, much better than I was: I can stand and walk. I will even take my leave of you, and pace softly towards my kinsman's.

CLO. Shall I bring thee on the way?

AUT. No, good-faced sir; no, sweet sir.

CLO. Then fare thee well: I must go buy spices for our sheep-shearing.

AUT. Prosper you, sweet sir!—[*Exit* CLOWN.] Your purse is not hot enough to purchase your spice. I'll be with you at your sheep-shearing too. If I make not this cheat bring out another, and the shearers prove sheep, let me be unrolled, and my name put in the book of virtue. [*Singing.*]

Jog on, jog on, the footpath way,
And merrily hent[9] the stile-a:
A merry heart goes all the day;
Your sad tires in a mile-a.

[*Exit.*

SCENE III

Later the same day, on a lawn before the SHEPHERD'S *cottage,* FLORIZEL *is in a swain's garb, while* PERDITA *is dressed gaily with flowers in her hair and dress.*

FLO. These your unusual weeds to each part of you
Do give a life: no shepherdess, but Flora
Peering in April's front. This your sheep-shearing
Is as a meeting of the petty gods,
And you the queen on't.

PER. Sir, my gracious lord,
To chide at your extremes it not becomes me:
O, pardon, that I name them! Your high self,
The gracious mark o' th' land, you have obscured
With a swain's wearing, and me, poor lowly maid,
Most goddess-like pranked up. But that our feasts
In every mess have folly, and the feeders
Digest it with a custom, I should blush
To see you so attirëd,—swoon, I think,
To show myself a glass.

FLO. I bless the time
When my good falcon made her flight across
Thy father's ground.

PER. Now, Jove afford you cause!
To me the difference forges dread: your greatness
Hath not been used to fear. Even now I tremble
To think your father, by some accident,
Should pass this way, as you did. O, the Fates!
How would he look, to see his work, so noble,
Vilely bound up? What would he say? Or how
Should I, in these my borrowed flaunts, behold
The sternness of his presence?

FLO. Apprehend
Nothing but jollity. The gods themselves,
Humbling their deities to love, have taken
The shapes of beasts upon them: Jupiter
Became a bull, and bellowed; the green Neptune
A ram, and bleated; and the fire-robed god,
Golden Apollo, a poor humble swain,
As I seem now. Their transformatiöns
Were never for a piece of beauty rarer,
Nor in a way so chaste, since my desires
Run not before mine honor, nor my lusts
Burn hotter than my faith.

PER. O, but, sir,
Your resolution cannot hold, when 'tis
Opposed, as it must be, by th' power of the king.
One of these two must be necessities,
Which then will speak—that you must change this purpose,
Or I my life.

FLO. Thou dearest Perdita,
With these forced thoughts, I prithee, darken not
The mirth o' th' feast: or I'll be thine, my fair,
Or not my father's; for I cannot be
Mine own, nor anything to any, if

[9] pass.

I be not thine: to this I am most constant,
Though destiny say no. Be merry, gentle;
Strangle such thoughts as these with any thing
That you behold the while. Your guests are coming:
Lift up your countenance, as it were the day
Of celebration of that nuptial which
We two have sworn shall come.
PER. O, lady Fortune,
Stand you auspicious!
FLO. See, your guests approach:
Address yourself to entertain them sprightly,
And let's be red with mirth.

Enter SHEPHERD, *with* POLIXENES *and* CAMILLO *(both disguised)*, CLOWN, MOPSA, DORCAS, *and Others.*

SHEP. Fie, daughter! when my old wife lived, upon
This day she was both pantler, butler, cook;
Both dame and servant; welcomed all, served all,
Would sing her song and dance her turn; now here,
At upper end o' th' table, now i' th' middle;
On his shoulder, and his; her face o' fire
With labor; and the thing she took to quench it,
She would to each one sip. You are retired,
As if you were a feasted one and not
The hostess of the meeting: pray you, bid
These unknown friends to's welcome; for it is
A way to make us better friends, more known.
Come, quench your blushes and present yourself
That which you are, mistress o' th' feast: come on,
And bid us welcome to your sheep-shearing,
As your good flock shall prosper.

PER., *to* POLIXENES. Sir, welcóme!
It is my father's will I should take on me
The hostess-ship o' th' day.—[*To* CAMILLO.] You're welcome, sir.—
Give me those flow'rs there, Dorcas.—Reverend sirs,
For you there's rosemary and rue; these keep
Seeming and savor all the winter long:
Grace and remembrance be to you both,
And welcome to our shearing!
POL. Shepherdess—
A fair one are you—well you fit our ages
With flowers of winter.
PER. Sir, the year growing ancient,
Not yet on summer's death, nor on the birth
Of trembling winter, the fairest flowers o' th' season
Are our carnations, and streaked gillyvors,
Which some call nature's bastards: of that kind
Our rustic garden's barren, and I care not
To get slips of them.
POL. Wherefore, gentle maiden,
Do you neglect them?
PER. For I have heard it said
There is an art which in their piedness shares
With great creating nature.
POL. Say there be;
Yet nature is made better by no mean
But nature makes that mean: so, over that art,
Which you say adds to nature, is an art
That nature makes. You see, sweet maid, we marry
A gentler scion to the wildest stock,
And make conceive a bark of baser kind
By bud of nobler race: this is an art
Which does mend nature—change it, rather; but
The art itself is nature.
PER. So it is.
POL. Then make your garden rich in gillyvors,
And do not call them bastards.
PER. I'll not put
The dibble in earth to set one slip of them;

No more than, were I painted, I would wish
This youth should say, "'twere well," and only therefore [179
Desire to breed by me. Here's flow'rs for you;
Hot lavender, mints, savory, marjoram;
The marigold, that goes to bed wi' th' sun,
And with him rises weeping: these are flow'rs
Of middle summer, and I think they are given
To men of middle age. You're very welcome. [190
CAM. I should leave grazing, were I of your flock,
And only live by gazing.
PER. Out, alas!
You'd be so lean that blasts of January
Would blow you through and through.—[*To* FLORIZEL.] Now, my fair'st friend,
I would I had some flow'rs o' th' spring that might [200
Become your time of day—and yours—and yours,
That wear upon your virgin branches yet
Your maidenheads growing. O Proserpina!
For the flow'rs now that, frighted, thou let'st fall
From Dis's waggon! daffodils,
That come before the swallow dares, and take [210
The winds of March with beauty; violets dim,
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes
Or Cytherea's breath; pale prime-roses,
That die unmarried, ere they can behold
Bright Phœbus in his strength (a malady
Most incident to maids); bold oxlips and
The crown imperial; lilies of all kinds,
The flower-de-luce being one.—O! these I lack [220
To make you garlands of, and my sweet friend,
To strew him o'er and o'er!
FLO. What! like a corse?
PER. No, like a bank for love to lie and play on;
Not like a corse; or if, not to be buried,
But quick[10] and in mine arms. Come, take your flow'rs: [229
Methinks I play as I have seen them do
In Whitsun pastorals: sure this robe of mine
Does change my disposition.
FLO. What you do
Still betters what is done. When you speak, sweet,
I'd have you do it ever: when you sing,
I'd have you buy and sell so; so give alms; [239
Pray so; and, for the ord'ring your affairs,
To sing them too: when you do dance, I wish you
A wave o' th' sea, that you might ever do
Nothing but that; move still, still so,
And own no other function: each your doing,
So singular in each particular,
Crowns what you are doing in the present deed, [250
That all your acts are queens.
PER. O Doricles!
Your praises are too large: but that your youth,
And the true blood which fairly peeps through it,
Do plainly give you out an unstained shepherd,
With wisdom I might fear, my Doricles,
You wooed me the false way. [260
FLO. I think you have
As little skill to fear as I have purpose
To put you to't. But, come; our dance, I pray.
Your hand, my Perdita: so turtles pair
That never mean to part.
PER. I'll swear for 'em.
[*They dance.*
POL. <This is the prettiest low-born lass that ever [270
Ran on the green-sord:[11] nothing she does or seems
But smacks of something greater than herself,
Too noble for this place.
CAM. He tells her something

[10] alive.
[11] sward.

That makes her blood look out. Good sooth, she is
The queen of curds and cream.>
Clo. Come on, strike up. [280
Dor. Mopsa must be your mistress: marry, garlic,
To mend her kissing with.
Mop. Now, in good time!
Clo. Not a word, a word: we stand upon our manners.
Come, strike up. [*Music. A dance of Shepherds and Shepherdesses.*
Pol. Pray, good shepherd, what fair swain is this [290
Which dances with your daughter?
Shep. They call him Doricles, and boasts himself
To have a worthy feeding; but I have it
Upon his own report and I believe it:
He looks like sooth. He says he loves my daughter:
I think so too; for never gazed the moon
Upon the water as he'll stand and read
As 'twere my daughter's eyes; and, to be plain, [301
I think there is not half a kiss to choose
Who loves another best.
Pol. She dances featly.
Shep. So she does any thing, though I report it
That should be silent. If young Doricles
Do light upon her, she shall bring him that
Which he not dreams of. [310

Enter a Servant.

Serv. O master! if you did but hear the pedlar at the door, you would never dance again after a tabor and pipe; no, the bagpipe could not move you. He sings several tunes faster than you'll tell money; he utters them as he had eaten ballads and all men's ears grew to his tunes. [319

Clo. He could never come better: he shall come in: I love a ballad but even too well, if it be doleful matter merrily set down, or a very pleasant thing indeed and sung lamentably.

Serv. He hath songs for man or woman, of all sizes; no milliner can so fit his customers with gloves: he has the prettiest love-songs for maids; so without bawdry, which is strange; with such delicate burthens of "dildoes" and "fadings," [330 "jump her and thump her;" and where some stretch-mouthed rascal would, as it were, mean mischief and break a foul gap into the matter, he makes the maid to answer, "Whoop, do me no harm, good man;" puts him off, slights him with "Whoop, do me no harm, good man."

Pol. This is a brave fellow.

Clo. Believe me, thou talkest of an admirable conceited fellow. Has he any unbraided wares? [341

Serv. He hath ribands of all the colors i' the rainbow; points more than all the lawyers in Bohemia can learnedly handle, though they come to him by the gross; inkles, caddisses, cambrics, lawns: why, he sings 'em over as they were gods or goddesses. You would think a smock were a she-angel, he so chants to the sleeve-hand and the work about the square on't. [351

Clo. Prithee, bring him in, and let him approach singing.

Per. Forewarn him that he use no scurrilous words in's tunes. [*Exit* Servant.

Clo. You have of these pedlars that have more in them than you'd think, sister.

Per. Ay, good brother, or go about to think. [361

Enter Autolycus, *no longer in rags.*

Aut., *singing.*

Lawn as white as driven snow;
Cyprus black as e'er was crow;
Gloves as sweet as damask roses;
Masks for faces and for noses;
Bugle-bracelet, necklace-amber,
Perfume for a lady's chamber,
Golden quoifs and stomachers, [370
For my lads to give their dears;
Pins and poking-sticks of steel;
What maids lack from head to heel:
Come buy of me, come; come buy, come buy;
Buy, lads, or else your lasses cry:
Come buy.

Clo. If I were not in love with Mopsa, thou shouldst take no money of me; but, being enthralled as I am, it will also [380 be the bondage of certain ribands and gloves.

Mop. I was promised them against the feast; but they come not too late now.

Dor. He hath promised you more than that, or there be liars.

Mop. He hath paid you all he promised you: may be he has paid you more, which will shame you to give him again.

Clo. Is there no manners left [390 among maids? will they wear their plackets where they should bear their faces? Is there not milking-time, when you are going to bed, or kiln-hole, to whistle off these secrets, but you must be tittle-tattling before all our guests? 'Tis well they are whispering: clamor[12] your tongues, and not a word more.

Mop. I have done. Come, you promised me a tawdry lace and a pair of sweet gloves. [401

Clo. Have I not told thee how I was cozened by the way, and lost all my money?

Aut. And indeed, sir, there are cozeners abroad; therefore it behoves men to be wary.

Clo. Fear not thou, man, thou shalt lose nothing here.

Aut. I hope so, sir; for I have about me many parcels of charge. [411

Clo. What hast here? ballads?

Mop. Pray now, buy some: I love a ballad in print, a-life, for then we are sure they are true.

Aut. Here's one to a very doleful tune. how a usurer's wife was brought to bed of twenty money-bags at a burden; and how she longed to eat adders' heads and toads carbonadoed.[13] [420

Mop. Is it true, think you?

Aut. Very true, and but a month old.

Dor. Bless me from marrying a usurer!

Aut. Here's the midwife's name to't, one Mistress Taleporter, and five or six honest wives' that were present. Why should I carry lies abroad?

[12] silence.
[13] sliced, for broiling.

Mop. Pray you now, buy it.

Clo. Come on, lay it by: and let's first see moe ballads; we'll buy the other things anon. [431

Aut. Here's another ballad of a fish that appeared upon the coast on Wednesday the fourscore of April, forty thousand fathom above water, and sung this ballad against the hard hearts of maids: it was thought she was a woman and was turned into a cold fish for she would not exchange flesh with one that loved her. The ballad is very pitiful and as true. [441

Dor. Is it true too, think you?

Aut. Five justices' hands at it, and witnesses more than my pack will hold.

Clo. Lay it by too: another.

Aut. This is a merry ballad, but a very pretty one.

Mop. Let's have some merry ones.

Aut. Why, this is a passing merry one, and goes to the tune of "Two maids [450 wooing a man:" there's scarce a maid westward but she sings it: 'tis in request, I can tell you.

Mop. We can both sing it: if thou'lt bear a part, thou shalt hear; 'tis in three parts.

Dor. We had the tune on't a month ago.

Aut. I can bear my part; you must know 'tis my occupation: have at it with you. [*They sing.* [461

Aut. Get you hence, for I must go,
Where it fits not you to know.
Dor. Whither?
Mop. O! whither?
Dor. Whither?
Mop. It becomes thy oath full well,
Thou to me thy secrets tell.
Dor. Me too: let me go thither. [469

Mop. Or thou go'st to th' grange or mill.
Dor. If to either, thou dost ill.
Aut. Neither.
Dor. What, neither?
Aut. Neither.
Dor. Thou hast sworn my love to be.
Mop. Thou hast sworn it more to me.
Then whither go'st? say whither?

Clo. We'll have this song out anon by ourselves: my father and the gentlemen

are in sad talk, and we'll not trouble them: come, bring away thy pack after me. Wenches, I'll buy for you both. Pedlar, let's have the first choice. Follow me, girls. [*Exit with* DORCAS *and* MOPSA.

AUT. <And you shall pay well for 'em.>

[*Singing.*]

Will you buy any tape,
Or lace for your cape,
My dainty duck, my dear-a?
Any silk, any thread,
Any toys for your head,
Of the new'st and fin'st, fin'st wear-a?
Come to the pedlar;
Money's a meddler,
That doth utter all men's ware-a. [*Exit.*

Re-enter SERVANT.

SERV. Master, there is three carters, three shepherds, three neat-herds, three swine-herds, that have made themselves all men of hair; they call themselves Saltiers; and they have a dance which the wenches say is a gallimaufry of gambols, because they are not in't; but they themselves are o' the mind—if it be not too rough for some that know little but bowling—it will please plentifully.

SHEP. Away! we'll none on't: here has been too much homely foolery already. I know, sir, we weary you.

POL. You weary those that refresh us: pray, let's see these four threes of herdsmen.

SERV. One three of them, by their own report, sir, hath danced before the king; and not the worst of the three but jumps twelve foot and a half by the squier.[14]

SHEP. Leave your prating: since these good men are pleased, let them come in; but quickly now.

SERV. Why, they stay at door, sir. [*Exit.*

Re-enter SERVANT, *with Twelve Rustics habited like Satyrs. They dance, and then exeunt.*

14 square.

POL., *answering a question put to him by the* SHEPHERD *during the dance.* O, father, you'll know more of that hereafter.

[*To* CAMILLO.] <Is it not too far gone? 'Tis time to part them.
He's simple and tells much.> [*To* FLORIZEL.] How now, fair shepherd!
Your heart is full of something that does take
Your mind from feasting. Sooth, when I was young,
And handed love as you do, I was wont
To load my she with knacks: I would have ransacked
The pedlar's silken treasury and have poured it
To her acceptance; you have let him go,
And nothing marted with him. If your lass
Interpretation should abuse and call this
Your lack of love or bounty, you were straited
For a reply—at least, if you make a care
Of happy holding her.

FLO. Old sir, I know
She prizes not such trifles as these are.
The gifts she looks from me are packed and locked
Up in my heart, which I have given already,
But not delivered. [*To* PERDITA.] O! hear me breathe my life
Before this ancient sir, who, it should seem,
Hath sometime loved: I take thy hand, this hand,
As soft as dove's down, and as white as it,
Or Ethiopian's tooth, or the fanned snow
That's bolted by the northern blasts twice o'er.

POL. What follows this?
How prettily the young swain seems to wash
The hand was fair before!—I have put you out:
But to your protestation: let me hear
What you profess.

FLO. Do, and be witness to't.

POL. And this my neighbor too?

FLO. And he, and more
Than he, and men, the earth, the heavens, and all;
That, were I crowned the most imperial monarch,
Thereof most worthy, were I the fairest youth
That ever made eye swerve, had force and knowledge
More than was ever man's, I would not prize them
Without her love; for her employ them all;
Commend them and condemn them to her service
Or to their own perdition.
POL. Fairly offered.
CAM. This shows a sound affection.
SHEP. But, my daughter,
Say you the like to him?
PER. I cannot speak
So well, nothing so well; no, nor mean better:
By th' pattern of mine own thoughts I cut out
The purity of his.
SHEP. Take hands; a bargain.—
And, friends unknown, you shall bear witness to't:
I give my daughter to him, and will make
Her portion equal his.
FLO. O! that must be
I' the virtue of your daughter: one being dead,
I shall have more than you can dream of yet;
Enough then for your wonder. But, come on;
Contract us fore these witnesses.
SHEP. Come, your hand;
And, daughter, yours.
POL. Soft, swain, awhile, beseech you.—
Have you a father?
FLO. I have; but what of him?
POL. Knows he of this?
FLO. He neither does nor shall.
POL. Methinks a father
Is, at the nuptial of his son, a guest
That best becomes the table. Pray you, once more,
Is not your father grown incapable
Of reasonable affairs? is he not stupid
With age and alt'ring rheums? can he speak? hear?
Know man from man? dispute his own estate?
Lies he not bed-rid? and again does nothing
But what he did being childish?
FLO. No, good sir:
He has his health and ampler strength indeed
Than most have of his age.
POL. By my white beard,
You offer him, if this be so, a wrong
Something unfilial. Reason my son
Should choose himself a wife, but as good reason
The father—all whose joy is nothing else
But fair posterity—should hold some counsel
In such a busïness.
FLO. I yield all this;
But for some other reasons, my grave sir,
Which 'tis not fit you know, I not acquaint
My father of this business.
POL. Let him know't.
FLO. He shall not.
POL. Prithee, let him.
FLO. No, he must not.
SHEP. Let him, my son: he shall not need to grieve
At knowing of thy choice.
FLO. Come, come, he must not.
Mark our contráct.
POL. Mark your divorce, young sir,
[*Discovering himself.*
Whom son I dare not call: thou art too base
To be acknowledged: thou a sceptre's heir,
That thus affects a sheep-hook! [*To* SHEPHERD.] Thou old traitor,
I am sorry that by hanging thee I can
But shorten thy life one week.—[*To* PERDITA.] And thou, fresh piece
Of excellent witchcraft, who of force must know
The royal fool thou cop'st with—
SHEP. O, my heart!

POL. I'll have thy beauty scratched with briers, and made [680
More homely than thy state.—For thee, fond boy,
If I may ever know thou dost but sigh
That thou no more shalt see this knack—as never
I mean thou shalt—we'll bar thee from succession;
Not hold thee of our blood; no, not our kin, [689
Far than Deucalion off: mark thou my words:
Follow us to the court.—[*To* SHEPHERD.] Thou, churl, for this time,
Though full of our displeasure, yet we free thee
From the dead blow of it.—[*To* PERDITA.] And you, enchantment,
Worthy enough a herdsman; yea, him too, [699
That makes himself, but for our honor therein,
Unworthy thee, if ever henceforth thou
These rural latches to his entrance open,
Or hoop his body more with thy embraces,
I will devise a death as cruel for thee
As thou art tender to't. [*Exit.*

PER. Even here undone!
I was not much afeard; for once or twice
I was about to speak and tell him [710 plainly,
The self-same sun that shines upon his court
Hides not his visage from our cottage, but
Looks on alike.—Will't please you, sir, be gone?
I told you what would come of this: beseech you,
Of your own state take care: this dream of mine, [721
Being now awake, I'll queen it no inch further,
But milk my ewes and weep.

CAM. Why, how now, father!
Speak, ere thou diest.

SHEP. I cannot speak, nor think,
Nor dare to know that which I know. [*To* FLORIZEL.] O sir!
You have undone a man of fourscore three, [731
That thought to fill his grave in quiet, yea,
To die upon the bed my father died,
To lie close by his honest bones; but now
Some hangman must put on my shroud and lay me
Where no priest shovels in dust.—[*To* PERDITA.] O cursed wretch! [740
That knew'st this was the prince, and wouldst adventure
To mingle faith with him. Undone! undone!
If I might die within this hour, I have lived
To die when I desire. [*Exit.*

FLO., *to* PERDITA. Why look you so upon me?
I am but sorry, not afeard; delayed, [750
But nothing altered. What I was, I am:
More straining on for plucking back; not following
My leash unwillingly.

CAM. Gracious my lord,
You know your father's temper: at this time
He will allow no speech, which I do guess [759
You do not purpose to him; and as hardly
Will he endure your sight as yet, I fear:
Then, till the fury of his highness settle,
Come not before him.

FLO. I not purpose it.
I think, Camillo?

CAM. Even he, my lord.

PER. How often have I told you 'twould be thus! [769
How often said my dignity would last
But till 'twere known!

FLO. It cannot fail but by
The violation of my faith; and then
Let nature crush the sides o' th' earth together,
And mar the seeds within! Lift up thy looks:
From my succession wipe me, father; I
Am heir to my affection.

CAM. Be advised. [780

FLO. I am; and by my fancy: [15] if my reason
Will thereto be obedient, I have reason;
If not, my senses, better pleased with madness,
Do bid it welcome.
CAM. This is desperate, sir.
FLO. So call it; but it does fulfill my vow; [789
I needs must think it honesty. Camillo,
Not for Bohemia, nor the pomp that may
Be thereat gleaned, for all the sun sees or
The close earth wombs or the profound sea hides
In unknown fathoms, will I break my oath
To this my fair beloved. Therefore, I pray you, [799
As you have ever been my father's honored friend,
When he shall miss me—as, in faith, I mean not
To see him any more—cast your good counsels
Upon his passion: let myself and fortune
Tug for the time to come. This you may know
And so deliver, I am put to sea [810
With her who[m] here I cannot hold on shore;
And most oppórtune to our need, I have
A vessel rides fast by, but not prepared
For this design. What course I mean to hold
Shall nothing benefit your knowledge, nor
Concern me the reporting.
CAM. O my lord! [820
I would your spirit were easier for advice,
Or stronger for your need.
FLO. Hark, Perdita. [*Takes her aside.*
[*To* CAMILLO.] I'll hear you by and by.
CAM. <He's irremovable,
Resolved for flight. Now were I happy if
His going I could frame to serve my turn, [829
Save him from danger, do him love and honor,
Purchase the sight again of dear Sicilia
And that unhappy king, my master, whom
I so much thirst to see.>
FLO., *returning to* CAMILLO. Now, good Camillo,
I am so fraught with curious business that
I leave out ceremony. [840
CAM. Sir, I think
You have heard of my poor services, i' th' love
That I have borne your father?
FLO. Very nobly
Have you deserved it: it is my father's music
To speak your deeds, not little of his care
To have them recompensed as thought on. [851
CAM. Well, my lord,
If you may please to think I love the king
And through him what's nearest to him, which is
Your gracious self, embrace but my direction;
If your more ponderous and settled project [860
May suffer alteration, on mine honor
I'll point you where you shall have such receiving
As shall become your highness; where you may
Enjoy your mistress—from the whom, I see,
There's no disjunction to be made, but by,
As, heavens forfend! your ruin—marry her; [870
And with my best endeavors in your absence
Your discontenting father strive to qualify,
And bring him up to liking.
FLO. How, Camillo,
May this, almost a miracle, be done,
That I may call thee something more than man,
And, after that, trust to thee? [880

[15] love.

CAM. Have you thought on
A place whereto you'll go?
FLO. Not any yet;
But, as th' unthought-on accident is guilty
To what we wildly do, so we profess
Ourselves to be the slaves of chance and flies
Of every wind that blows.
CAM. Then list to me: [890
This follows; if you will not change your purpose
But undergo this flight, make for Sicilia,
And there present yourself and your fair princess—
For so, I see, she must be—fore Leontes;
She shall be habited as it becomes
The partner of your bed. Methinks I see [899
Leontes opening his free arms and weeping
His welcomes forth; asks thee, the son, forgiveness
As 'twere i' th' father's person; kisses the hands
Of your fresh princess; o'er and o'er divides him
'Twixt his unkindness and his kindness: th' one [909
He chides to hell, and bids the other grow
Faster than thought or time.
FLO. Worthy Camillo,
What color for my visitation shall I
Hold up before him?
CAM. Sent by the king your father
To greet him and to give him comforts. Sir,
The manner of your bearing towards him, with [920
What you as from your father shall deliver,
Things known betwixt us three, I'll write you down:
The which shall point you forth at every sitting
What you must say; that he shall not perceive
But that you have your father's bosom there [930
And speak his very heart.
FLO. I am bound to you:
There is some sap in this.
CAM. A course more promising
Than a wild dedication of yourselves
To unpathed waters, undreamed shores, most certain
To miseries enough: no hope to help you, [939
But as you shake off one to take another;
Nothing so certain as your anchors, who
Do their best office, if they can but stay you
Where you'll be loath to be. Besides, you know,
Prosperity's the very bond of love,
Whose fresh complexion and whose heart together
Affliction alters. [950
PER. One of these is true:
I think affliction may subdue the cheek,
But not take in the mind.
CAM. Yea, say you so?
There shall not at your father's house these seven years
Be born another such.
FLO. My good Camillo,
She is as forward of her breeding as
She is i' th' rear o' her birth. [960
CAM. I cannot say 'tis pity
She lacks instructions, for she seems a mistress
To most that teach.
PER. Your pardon, sir; for this
I'll blush you thanks.
FLO. My prettiest Perdita!—
But O, the thorns we stand upon! Camillo,
Preserver of my father, now of me, [970
The med'cine of our house, how shall we do?
We are not furnished like Bohemia's son,
Nor shall appear in Sicilia.
CAM. My lord,
Fear none of this: I think you know my fortunes
Do all lie there: it shall be so my care
To have you royally appointed as if
The scene you play were mine. For instance, sir, [981

That you may know you shall not want, one word. [*They talk aside.*

Enter AUTOLYCUS.

AUT., *supposing himself alone.* <Ha, ha! what a fool Honesty is! and Trust, his sworn brother, a very simple gentleman! I have sold all my trumpery: not a counterfeit stone, not a riband, glass, pomander, brooch, table-book, ballad, [990 knife, tape, glove, shoe-tie, bracelet, horn-ring, to keep my pack from fasting: they throng who should buy first, as if my trinkets had been hallowed and brought a benediction to the buyer: by which means I saw whose purse was best in picture; and what I saw, to my good use I remembered. My clown, who wants but something to be a reasonable man, grew so in love with the wenches' song that [1000 he would not stir his pettitoes till he had both tune and words; which so drew the rest of the herd to me that all their other senses stuck in ears: you might have pinched a placket, it was senseless; 'twas nothing to geld a codpiece of a purse; I would have filed keys off that hung in chains: no hearing, no feeling, but my sir's song, and admiring the nothing of it; so that, in this time of lethargy, [1010 I picked and cut most of their festival purses; and, had not the old man come in with a whoo-bub against his daughter and the king's son, and scared my choughs from the chaff, I had not left a purse alive in the whole army.>

[CAMILLO, FLORIZEL, *and* PERDITA *come forward,* CAMILLO *continuing aloud the whispered conversation.*

CAM. Nay, but my letters, by this means being here [1021
So soon as you arrive, shall clear that doubt.

FLO. And those that you'll procure from King Leontes—

CAM. Shall satisfy your father.

PER. Happy be you!
All that you speak shows fair.

CAM. <Whom have we here?
We'll make an instrument of this: omit
Nothing may give us aid.> [1031

AUT. <If they have overheard me now, why, hanging.>

CAM. How now, good fellow! Why shak'st thou so? Fear not, man; here's no harm intended to thee.

AUT. I am a poor fellow, sir.

CAM. Why, be so still; here's nobody will steal that from thee; yet, for the outside of thy poverty we must make [1040 an exchange; therefore, discase thee instantly—thou must think, there's a necessity in't—and change garments with this gentleman: though the pennyworth on his side be the worst, yet hold thee, there's some boot.

AUT. I am a poor fellow, sir. <I know ye well enough.>

CAM. Nay, prithee, dispatch: the gentleman is half flayed already. [1050

AUT. Are you in earnest, sir? <I smell the trick on't.>

FLO. Dispatch, I prithee.

AUT. Indeed, I have had earnest; but I cannot with conscience take it.

CAM. Unbuckle, unbuckle.— [FLORIZEL *and* AUTOLYCUS *exchange garments.*

Fortunate mistress—let my prophecy
Come home to ye!—you must retire yourself [1061
Into some covert; take your sweetheart's hat
And pluck it o'er your brows; muffle your face;
Dismantle you, and, as you can, disliken
The truth of your own seeming; that you may—
For I do fear eyes over [you]—to shipboard [1070
Get undescried.

PER. I see the play so lies
That I must bear a part.

CAM. No remedy.—
Have you done there?

FLO. Should I now meet my father
He would not call me son.

CAM. Nay, you shall have no hat.—
[*Takes* AUTOLYCUS' *hat from* FLORIZEL, *and gives it to* PERDITA. [1080
Come, lady, come.—Farewell, my friend.

AUT. Adieu, sir.

FLO. O, Perdita, what have we twain forgot!
Pray you, a word. [*They converse apart.*
CAM. <What I do next shall be to tell the king
Of this escape, and whither they are bound;
Wherein my hope is I shall so prevail
To force him after: in whose company
I shall re-view Sicilia, for whose sight
I have a woman's longing.>
FLO. Fortune speed us!—
Thus we set on, Camillo, to the sea-side.
CAM. The swifter speed, the better.
[*Exeunt* FLORIZEL, PERDITA, *and* CAMILLO.

AUT. I understand the business; I hear it. To have an open ear, a quick eye, and a nimble hand, is necessary for a cut-purse: a good nose is requisite also, to smell out work for the other senses. I see this is the time that the unjust man doth thrive. What an exchange had this been without boot! what a boot is here with this exchange! Sure, the gods do this year connive at us, and we may do anything extempore. The prince himself is about a piece of iniquity; stealing away from his father with his clog at his heels. If I thought it were a piece of honesty to acquaint the king withal, I would not do't: I hold it the more knavery to conceal it, and therein am I constant to my profession. [*Seeing the* CLOWN *and the* SHEPHERD *approach.*] Aside, aside: here is more matter for a hot brain. Every lane's end, every shop, church, session, hanging, yields a careful man work. [*Conceals himself.*

Re-enter CLOWN *and* SHEPHERD.

CLO. See, see, what a man you are now! There is no other way but to tell the king she's a changeling and none of your flesh and blood.

SHEP. Nay, but hear me.

CLO. Nay, but hear *me*.

SHEP. Go to, then.

CLO. She being none of your flesh and blood, your flesh and blood has not offended the king; and so your flesh and blood is not to be punished by him. Show those things you found about her; those secret things, all but what she has with her: this being done, let the law go whistle: I warrant you.

SHEP. I will tell the king all, every word; yea, and his son's pranks too; who, I may say, is no honest man neither to his father nor to me, to go about to make me the king's brother-in-law.

CLO. Indeed, brother-in-law was the furthest off you could have been to him, and then your blood had been the dearer by I know not how much an ounce.

AUT. <Very wisely, puppies!>

SHEP. Well, let us to the king: there is that in this fardel will make him scratch his beard.

AUT. <I know not what impediment this complaint may be to the flight of my master.>

CLO. Pray heartily he be at palace!

AUT. <Though I am not naturally honest, I am so sometimes by chance: let me pocket up my pedlar's excrement.> [*Takes off his false beard.*] How now, rustics! whither are you bound?

SHEP. To the palace, an it like your worship.

AUT. Your affairs there, what, with whom, the condition of that fardel, the place of your dwelling, your names, your ages, of what having, breeding, and anything that is fitting to be known, discover.

CLO. We are but plain fellows, sir.

AUT. A lie; you are rough and hairy. Let me have no lying; it becomes none but tradesmen, and they often give us soldiers the lie; but we pay them for it with stamped coin, not stabbing steel; therefore they do not give us the lie.

CLO. Your worship had like to have given us one, if you had not taken yourself with the manner.

SHEP. Are you a courtier, an't like you, sir?

AUT. Whether it like me or no, I am a courtier. Seest thou not the air of the

court in these enfoldings?[16] hath not my gait in it the measure of the court? receives not thy nose court-odor from me? reflect I not on thy baseness court-contempt? Think'st thou, for that I insinuate or tease from thee thy business, I am therefore no courtier? I am courtier, cap-a-pe, and one that will either push on or pluck back thy business [1190 there: whereupon I command thee to open thy affair.

Shep. My business, sir, is to the king.

Aut. What advocate hast thou to him?

Shep. I know not, an't like you.

Clo. <Advocate's the court-word for a pheasant: say you have none.>

Shep. None, sir; I have no pheasant, cock nor hen. [1199

Aut. How blessed are we that are not simple men!

Yet nature might have made me as these are;

Therefore I'll not disdain.

Clo. <This cannot be but a great courtier.

Shep. His garments are rich, but he wears them not handsomely.

Clo. He seems to be the more noble in being fantastical: a great man, [1210 I'll warrant; I know by the picking on's teeth.>

Aut. The fardel there? what's i' the fardel? Wherefore that box?

Shep. Sir, there lies such secrets in this fardel and box which none must know but the king; and which he shall know within this hour if I may come to the speech of him. [1219

Aut. Age, thou hast lost thy labor.

Shep. Why, sir?

Aut. The king is not at the palace; he is gone aboard a new ship to purge melancholy and air himself: for, if thou be'st capable of things serious, thou must know the king is full of grief.

Shep. So 'tis said, sir, about his son, that should have married a shepherd's daughter. [1229

Aut. If that shepherd be not now in handfast, let him fly: the curses he shall have, the torture he shall feel, will break the back of man, the heart of monster.

Clo. Think you so, sir?

Aut. Not he alone shall suffer what wit can make heavy and vengeance bitter; but those that are germane to him, though removed fifty times, shall all come under the hangman: which, though it be great pity, yet it is necessary. An old [1240 sheep-whistling rogue, a ram-tender, to offer to have his daughter come into grace! Some say he shall be stoned; but that death is too soft for him, say I: draw our throne into a sheep cote! all deaths are too few, the sharpest too easy.

Clo. Has the old man e'er a son, sir, do you hear, an't like you, sir?

Aut. He has a son, who shall be flayed alive; then 'nointed over with honey, [1250 set on the head of a wasp's nest; then stand till he be three quarters and a dram dead; then recovered again with aqua-vitæ or some other hot infusion; then, raw as he is, and in the hottest day prognostication proclaims, shall he be set against a brick-wall, the sun looking with a southward eye upon him, where he is to behold him with flies blown to death. But what talk we of these traitorly rascals, [1260 whose miseries are to be smiled at, their offences being so capital? Tell me—for you seem to be honest plain men—what you have to the king: being something gently considered, I'll bring you where he is aboard, tender your persons to his presence, whisper him in your behalfs; and if it be in man besides the king to effect your suits, here is a man shall do it.

Clo. <He seems to be of great [1270 authority: close with him, give him gold; and, though authority be a stubborn bear, yet he is oft led by the nose with gold. Show the inside of your purse to the outside of his hand, and no more ado. Remember, "stoned," and "flayed alive!">

[16] The shepherd swain's clothes which Autolycus had got from Florizel have evidently now resolved themselves into the Prince's court dress. This is but one of the many gross inconsistencies that are considered pardonable on the part of Shakespeare, but unpardonable on the part of any other.

SHEP. An't please you, sir, to undertake the business for us, here is that gold I have: I'll make it as much more [1280 and leave this young man in pawn till I bring it you.

AUT. After I have done what I promised?

SHEP. Ay, sir.

AUT. Well, give me the moiety. Are you a party in this business?

CLO. In some sort, sir: but, though my case be a pitiful one, I hope I shall not be flayed out of it. [1290

AUT. O! that's the case of the shepherd's son: hang him, he'll be made an example.

CLO., *to* SHEPHERD. <Comfort, good comfort! we must to the king and show our strange sights: he must know 'tis none of your daughter nor my sister; we are gone else.> Sir, I will give you as much as this old man does, when the business is performed; and re- [1300 main, as he says, your pawn till it be brought you.

AUT. I will trust you. Walk before, toward the sea-side; go on the right hand; I will but look upon the hedge and follow you.

CLO. <We are blessed in this man, as I may say, even blessed.

SHEP. Let's before as he bids us. He was provided to do us good.> [*Exeunt* SHEPHERD *and* CLOWN. [1311

AUT. If I had a mind to be honest, I see Fortune would not suffer me: she drops booties in my mouth. I am courted now with a double occasion, gold and a means to do the prince my master good; which who knows how that may turn back to my advancement? I will bring these two moles, these blind ones, aboard him: if he think it fit to shore [1320 them again, and that the complaint they have to the king concerns him nothing, let him call me rogue for being so far officious; for I am proof against that title and what shame else belongs to't. To him will I present them: there may be matter in it. [*Exit.*

ACT FIVE

SCENE I

LEONTES, *for all the fifteen or sixteen years that have passed since his outburst of criminal jealousy, has never forgiven himself or ceased to lament the price he had to pay for his folly. He is in his palace, attended by* PAULINA, CLEOMENES, DION, *other Lords and Servants.* CLEOMENES *and* DION *are anxious for him to marry again, for reasons of state.* PAULINA *is opposed to this policy, for reasons which she does not reveal.* [11

CLEO. Sir, you have done enough, and have performed
A saint-like sorrow: no fault could you make
Which you have not redeemed; indeed, paid down
More penitence than done trespass. At the last,
Do as the heavens have done, forget your evil; [21
With them, forgive yourself.
LEON. Whilst I remember
Her and her virtues, I cannot forget
My blemishes in them, and so still think of
The wrong I did myself; which was so much,
That heirless it hath made my kingdom, and [30
Destroyed the sweet'st companion that e'er man
Bred his hopes out of.
PAUL. True, too true, my lord;
If one by one you wedded all the world,
Or from the all that are took something good,
To make a perfect woman, she you killed
Would be unparallelled. [40
LEON. I think so. "Killed!"
She I killed! I did so; but thou strik'st me
Sorely to say I did: it is as bitter
Upon thy tongue as in my thought. Now, good now,
Say so but seldom.
CLEO. Not at all, good lady:

You might have spoken a thousand things that would
Have done the time more benefit, and graced
Your kindness better.
PAUL. You are one of those
Would have him wed again.
DION. If you would not so,
You pity not the state, nor the remembrance
Of his most sovereign name; consider little
What dangers, by his highness' fail of issue,
May drop upon his kingdom and devour
Incertain lookers-on. What were more holy
Than to rejoice the former queen is well?
What holier than, for royalty's repair,
For present comfort, and for future good,
To bless the bed of majesty again
With a sweet fellow to't?
PAUL. There is none worthy,
Respecting her that's gone. Besides, the gods
Will have fulfilled their secret purposes;
For has not the divine Apollo said,
Is't not the tenor of his oracle,
That King Leontes shall not have an heir
Till his lost child be found? which that it shall,
Is all as monstrous to our human reason
As my Antigonus to break his grave
And come again to me; who, on my life,
Did perish with the infant. 'Tis your counsel
My lord should to the heavens be contrary,
Oppose against their wills.—[*To* LEONTES.] Care not for issue;
The crown will find an heir: great Alexander
Left his to th' worthiest, so his successor
Was like to be the best.
LEON. Good Paulina,
Who hast the memory of Hermione,
I know, in honor; O! that ever I
Had squared me to thy counsel! then, even now,
I might have looked upon my queen's full eyes,
Have taken treasure from her lips—
PAUL. And left them
More rich for what they yielded.
LEON. Thou speak'st truth.
No more such wives; therefore, no wife: one worse,
And better used, would make her sainted spirit
Again possess her corps[e] and on this stage,
Where we['re] offenders now, appear soul-vexed,
And begin, "Why to me?"
PAUL. Had she such power,
She had just cause.
LEON. She had; and would incense me
To murder her I married.
PAUL. I should so:
Were I the ghost that walked, I'd bid you mark
Her eye, and tell me for what dull part in't
You chose her; then I'd shriek, that even your ears
Should rift[1] to hear me; and the words that followed
Should be "Remember mine."
LEON. Stars, stars!
And all eyes else dead coals.—Fear thou no wife;
I'll have no wife, Paulina.
PAUL. Will you swear
Never to marry but by my free leave?
LEON. Never, Paulina: so be blessed my spirit!
PAUL. Then, good my lords, bear witness to his oath.
CLEO. You tempt him over-much.
PAUL. Unless another,
As like Hermione as is her picture,
Affront[2] his eye.
CLEO. Good madam—
PAUL. I have done.[3]
Yet, if my lord will marry—if you will, sir,

[1] split.
[2] come before.
[3] B gives these words to Leontes.

No remedy but you will—give me the office
To choose you a queen, she shall not be so young
As was your former; but she shall be such
As, walked your first queen's ghost, it should take joy
To see her in your arms.
LEON. My true Paulina,
We shall not marry till thou bidd'st us.
PAUL. That
Shall be when your first queen's again in breath;
Never till then.

Enter a GENTLEMAN.

GENT. One that gives out himself Prince Florizel,
Son of Polixenes, with his princess—she,
The fairest I have yet beheld—desires access
To your high presence.
LEON. What with him? he comes not
Like to his father's greatness; his approach,
So out of circumstance and sudden, tells us
'Tis not a visitation framed, but forced
By need and accident. What train?
GENT. But few,
And those but mean.
LEON. His princess, say you, with him?
GENT. Ay, the most peerless piece of earth, I think,
That e'er the sun shone bright on.
PAUL. O Hermione!
As every present time doth boast itself
Above a better gone, so must thy grave
Give way to what's seen now.—Sir, you yourself
Have said and writ so; but your writing now
Is colder than that theme. "She had not been,
Nor was not to be equalled;" thus your verse
Flowed with her beauty once: 'tis shrewdly ebbed
To say you have seen a better.
GENT. Pardon, madam:
The one I have almost forgot.—[*To* LEONTES.] Your pardon.
[*To* PAULINA.] The other, when she has obtained your eye,
Will have your tongue too. This is a creature,
Would she begin a sect, might quench the zeal
Of all professors else, make proselytes
Of who she but bid follow.
PAUL. How! not women!
GENT. Women will love her, that she is a woman
More worth than any man; men, that she is
The rarest of all women.
LEON. Go, Cleomenes;
Yourself, assisted with your honored friends,
Bring them to our embracement.—Still, 'tis strange, [*Exeunt* CLEOMENES, *Lords and* GENTLEMAN.
He thus should steal upon us.
PAUL. Had our prince—
Jewel of children—seen this hour, he had paired
Well with this lord: there was not full a month
Between their births.
LEON. Prithee, no more: cease! thou know'st
He dies to me again when talked of: sure,
When I shall see this gentleman, thy speeches
Will bring me to consider that which may
Unfurnish me of reason. They are come.

Re-enter CLEOMENES, *with* FLORIZEL, PERDITA, *and Others.*

Your mother was most true to wedlock, prince;
For she did print your royal father off,
Conceiving you. Were I but twenty-one,
Your father's image is so hit in you,
His very air, that I should call you brother,

As I did him, and speak of something wildly
By us performed before. Most dearly welcome!—
And you, fair princess, goddess!—O, alas!
I lost a couple, that 'twixt heaven and earth
Might thus have stood begetting wonder as
You, gracious couple, do: and then I lost—
All mine own folly—the society,
Amity too, of your brave father, whom,
Though bearing misery, I desire my life
Once more to look on him.
FLO. By his command
Have I here touched Sicilia; and from him
Give you all greetings that a king, at friend,
Can send his brother; and, but infirmity,
Which waits upon worn times, hath something seized
His wished ability, he had himself
The land and waters 'twixt your throne and his
Measured to look upon you, whom he loves—
He bade me say so—more than all the sceptres
And those that bear them living.
LEON. O, my brother!
Good gentleman, the wrongs I have done thee stir
Afresh within me, and these thy offices,
So rarely kind, are as interpreters
Of my behind-hand slackness!—Welcome hither,
As is the spring to th' earth. And hath he too
Exposed this paragon to th' fearful usage—
At least, ungentle—of the dreadful Neptune,
To greet a man not worth her pains, much less
Th' adventure of her person?
FLO. Good my lord,
She came from Libya.
LEON. Where the war-like Smalus,
That noble honored lord, is feared and loved?
FLO. Most royal sir, from thence; from him, whose daughter
His tears proclaimed his, parting with her: thence—
A prosperous south-wind friendly—we have crossed,
To execute the charge my father gave me
For visiting your highness. My best train
I have from your Sicilian shores dismissed,
Who for Bohemia bend, to signify
Not only my success in Libya, sir,
But my arrival and my wife's, in safety
Here where we are.
LEON. The blessëd gods
Purge all infection from our air whilst you
Do climate here! You have a holy father,
A graceful[4] gentleman; against whose person,
So sacred as it is, I have done sin;
For which the heavens, taking angry note,
Have left me issueless; your father's blessed—
As he from heaven merits it—with you,
Worthy his goodness. What might I have been,
Might I a son and daughter now have looked on,
Such goodly things as you!

Enter a LORD.

LORD. Most noble sir,
That which I shall report will bear no credit,
Were not the proof so nigh. Please you, great sir,
Bohemia greets you from himself by me;
Desires you to attach his son, who has—
His dignity and duty both cast off—
Fled from his father, from his hopes, and with
A shepherd's daughter.
LEON. Where's Bohemia? speak.

[4] full of virtue.

LORD. Here in your city; I now came from him:
I speak amazëdly, and it becomes
My marvel and my message. To your court
Whiles he was hast'ning—in the chase, it seems,
Of this fair couple—meets he on the way
The father of this seeming lady and
Her brother, having both their country quitted
With this young prince.
FLO., *to* PERDITA. Camillo has betrayed me;
Whose honor and whose honesty till now
Endured all weathers.
LORD. Lay't so to his charge:
He's with the king your father.
LEON. Who? Camillo?
LORD. Camillo, sir: I spake with him, who now
Has these poor men in question. Never saw I
Wretches so quake: they kneel, they kiss the earth,
Forswear themselves as often as they speak:
Bohemia stops his ears, and threatens them
With divers deaths in death.
PER. O my poor father!—
The heaven sets spies upon us, will not have
Our contract celebrated.
LEON. You are married?
FLO. We are not, sir, nor are we like to be:
The stars, I see, will kiss the valleys first:
The odds for high and low's alike.
LEON. My lord,
Is this the daughter of a king?
FLO. She is,
When once she is my wife.
LEON. That "once", I see, by your good father's speed,
Will come on very slowly. I am sorry,
Most sorry, you have broken from his liking
Where you were tied in duty; and as sorry
Your choice is not so rich in worth as beauty,
That you might well enjoy her.
FLO., *to* PERDITA. Dear, look up:
Though Fortune, visible an enemy,
Should chase us with my father, power no jot
Hath she to change our loves.—[*To* LEONTES.] Beseech you, sir,
Remember since you owed no more to time
Than I do now; with thought of such affections,
Step forth mine advocate; at your request
My father will grant precious things as trifles.
LEON. Would he do so, I'd beg your precious mistress,
Which he counts but a trifle.
PAUL. Sir, my liege,
Your eye hath too much youth in't: not a month
Fore your queen died, she was more worth such gazes
Than what you look on now.
LEON. I thought of her,
Even in these looks I made.—[*To* FLORIZEL.] But your petition
Is yet unanswered. I will to your father:
Your honor not o'erthrown by your desires,
I am friend to them and you; upon which errand
I now go toward him. Therefore follow me,
And mark what way I make: come, good my lord. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

AUTOLYCUS *meets a* GENTLEMAN *before the palace.*

AUT. Beseech you, sir, were you present at this relation?

GENT. I was by at the opening of the fardel, heard the old shepherd deliver the manner how he found it: whereupon, after a little amazedness, we were all commanded out of the chamber; only

this methought I heard the shepherd say, he found the child. [11

Aut. I would most gladly know the issue of it.

Gent. I make a broken delivery of the business; but the changes I perceived in the king and Camillo were very notes of admiration: they seemed almost, with staring on one another, to tear the cases of their eyes; there was speech in their dumbness, language in their very ges- [20 ture; they looked as they had heard of a world ransomed, or one destroyed; a notable passion of wonder appeared in them; but the wisest beholder, that knew no more but seeing, could not say if th' importance were joy or sorrow; but in the extremity of the one it must needs be.

Enter another Gentleman.

Here comes a gentleman that haply knows more.—The news, Rogero? [30

2 Gent. Nothing but bonfires: the oracle is fulfilled; the king's daughter is found: such a deal of wonder is broken out within this hour that ballad-makers cannot be able to express it.

Enter a third Gentleman.

Here comes the lady Paulina's steward: he can deliver you more.—How goes it now, sir? this news which is called true is so like an old tale that the verity of [40 it is in strong suspicion: has the king found his heir?

3 Gent. Most true, if ever truth were pregnant by circumstance: that which you hear you'll swear you see, there is such unity in the proofs. The mantle of Queen Hermione, her jewel about the neck of it, the letters of Antigonus found with it, which they know to be his character; the majesty of the creature in [50 resemblance of the mother, the affection [5] of nobleness which nature shows above her breeding, and many other evidences proclaim her with all certainty to be the king's daughter. Did you see the meeting of the two kings?

2 Gent. No.

3 Gent. Then have you lost a sight, which was to be seen, cannot be spoken of. There might you have beheld one [60 joy crown another, so and in such manner that, it seemed, sorrow wept to take leave of them, for their joy waded in tears. There was casting up of eyes, holding up of hands, with countenance[s] of such distraction that they were to be known by garment, not by favor.[6] Our king, being ready to leap out of himself for joy of his found daughter, as if that joy were now become a loss, cries, "O, [70 thy mother, thy mother!" then asks Bohemia forgiveness; then embraces his son-in-law; then again worries he his daughter with clipping her; now he thanks the old shepherd, which stands by like a weather-bitten conduit of many kings' reigns. I never heard of such another encounter, which lames report to follow it, and undoes description to do [7] it. [79

2 Gent. What, pray you, became of Antigonus that carried hence the child?

3 Gent. Like an old tale still, which will have matter to rehearse, though credit be asleep and not an ear open. He was torn to pieces with a bear: this avouches the shepherd's son, who has not only his innocence—which seems much—to justify him, but a handkerchief and rings of his that Paulina knows. [89

1 Gent. What became of his bark and his followers?

3 Gent. Wracked, the same instant of their master's death, and in the view of the shepherd: so that all the instruments which aided to expose the child were even then lost when it was found. But, O! the noble combat that 'twixt joy and sorrow was fought in Paulina. She had one eye declined for the loss of her husband, another elevated that the oracle [100 was fulfilled: she lifted the princess from the earth, and so locks her in embracing, as if she would pin her to her heart that she might no more be in danger of losing.

1 Gent. The dignity of this act was worth the audience of kings and princes, for by such was it acted.

3 Gent. One of the prettiest touches

[5] character.

[6] looks.

[7] describe.

of all, and that which angled for mine eyes—caught the water though not [110 the fish—was when, at the relation of the queen's death, with the manner how she came to it, bravely confessed and lamented by the king, how attentiveness wounded his daughter; till, from one sign of dolor to another, she did, with an "alas!" I would fain say, bleed tears for I am sure my heart wept blood. Who was most marble there changed color; some swounded, all sorrowed: if all [120 the world could have seen't, the woe had been universal.

1 Gent. Are they returned to the court?

3 Gent. No; the princess hearing of her mother's statue, which is in the keeping of Paulina—a piece many years in doing, and now newly performed by that rare Italian master, Julio Romano; who, had he himself eternity and could put [130 breath into his work, would beguile Nature of her custom, so perfectly he is her ape: he so near to Hermione hath done Hermione that they say one would speak to her and stand in hope of answer: thither with all greediness of affection are they gone, and there they intend to sup.

2 Gent. I thought she had some great matter there in hand, for she hath [140 privately, twice or thrice a day, ever since the death of Hermione, visited that removed house. Shall we thither and with our company piece the rejoicing?

1 Gent. Who would be thence that has the benefit of access? every wink of an eye some new grace will be born: our absence makes us unthrifty to our knowledge. Let's along. [*Exeunt* Gentlemen. [150

Aut. Now, had I not the dash of my former life in me, would preferment drop on my head. I brought the old man and his son aboard the prince; told him I heard them talk of a fardel and I know not what; but he at that time, overfond of the shepherd's daughter—so he then took her to be—who began to be much sea-sick, and himself little better, extremity of weather continuing, this mys- [160 tery remained undiscovered. But 'tis all one to me; for, had I been the finder out of this secret, it would not have relished among my other discredits. Here come those I have done good to against my will, and already appearing in the blossoms of their fortune.

Enter Shepherd *and* Clown, *elaborately dressed.* [169

Shep. Come, boy; I am past moe children, but thy sons and daughters will be all gentlemen born.

Clo. You are well met, sir. You denied to fight with me this other day, because I was no gentleman born: see you these clothes? say you see them not and think me still no gentleman born: you were best say these robes are not gentleman born. Give me the lie, do, and try whether I am not now gentleman born. [181

Aut. I know you are now, sir, a gentleman born.

Clo. Ay, and have been so any time these four hours.

Shep. And so have I, boy.

Clo. So you have: but I was a gentleman born before my father; for the king's son took me by the hand and called me brother; and then the two kings called [190 my father brother; and then the prince my brother and the princess my sister called my father father; and so we wept: and there was the first gentleman-like tears that ever we shed.

Shep. We may live, son, to shed many more.

Clo. Ay; or else 'twere hard luck, being in so preposterous estate as we are.

Aut. I humbly beseech you, sir, to [200 pardon me all the faults I have committed to your worship, and to give me your good report to the prince my master.

Shep. Prithee, son, do; for we must be gentle, now we are gentlemen.

Clo. Thou wilt amend thy life?

Aut. Ay, an it like your good worship.

Clo. Give me thy hand: I will swear

to the prince thou art as honest a true fellow as any is in Bohemia. [211

SHEP. You may say it, but not swear it.

CLO. Not swear it, now I am a gentleman? Let boors and franklins say it, I'll swear it.

SHEP. How if it be false, son?

CLO. If it be ne'er so false, a true gentleman may swear it in the behalf of his friend: and I'll swear to the prince thou art a tall [8] fellow of thy hands, and that [220 thou wilt not be drunk; but I know thou art no tall fellow of thy hands, and that thou wilt be drunk; but I'll swear it, and I would thou wouldst be a tall fellow of thy hands.

AUT. I will prove so, sir, to my power.

CLO. Ay, by any means prove a tall fellow: if I do not wonder how thou darest venture to be drunk, not being a tall fellow, trust me not. Hark! the kings [230 and the princes, our kindred, are going to see the queen's picture.[9] Come, follow us: we'll be thy good masters.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

The time has come for PAULINA *to spring her great surprise upon the repentant* LEONTES. *He,* POLIXENES, FLORIZEL, PERDITA, CAMILLO, *Lords, and others have accompanied* PAULINA *to her house. She ushers them into a large room, used as a chapel, and containing, in the background, a curtained recess.*

LEON. O grave and good Paulina, the great comfort [10
That I have had of thee!

PAUL. What, sovereign sir,
I did not well I meant well. All my services
You have paid home; but, that you have vouchsafed,
With your crowned brother and these your contracted
Heirs of your kingdoms, my poor house to visit, [20
It is a surplus of your grace, which never
My life may last to answer.

LEON. O Paulina!
We honor you with trouble; but we came
To see the statue of our queen: your gallery
Have we passed through, not without much content
In many singularities; but we saw not
That which my daughter came to look upon, [31
The statue of her mother.

PAUL. As she lived peerless,
So her dead likeness, I do well believe,
Excels whatever yet you looked upon
Or hand of man hath done; therefore I keep it
Lonely, apart. But here it is: prepare
To see the life as lively mocked as ever
Still sleep mocked death: behold! and [40 say 'tis well. [PAULINA *draws back a curtain, and discovers* HERMIONE *as a statue.*

I like your silence: it the more shows off
Your wonder; but yet speak.—First you, my liege:
Comes it not something near?

LEON. Her natural posture!
Chide me, dear stone, that I may say, indeed, [50
Thou art Hermione; or, rather, thou art she
In thy not chiding, for she was as tender
As infancy and grace.—But yet, Paulina,
Hermione was not so much wrinkled; nothing
So aged as this seems.

POL. O! not by much.

PAUL. So much the more our carver's excellence; [60
Which lets go by some sixteen years and makes her
As she lived now.

LEON. As now she might have done,
So much to my good comfort, as it is
Now piercing to my soul. O! thus she stood,
Even with such life of majesty—warm life,
As now it coldly stands—when first I wooed her. [71
I am ashamed: does not the stone rebuke me

[8] brave.
[9] painted statue.

For being more stone than it?—O, royal piece!
There's magic in thy majesty, which has
My evils conjured to remembrance, and
From thy admiring daughter took the spirits,
Standing like stone with thee. [80
PER. And give me leave,
And do not say 'tis superstition, that
I kneel, and then implore her blessing.—Lady,
Dear queen, that ended when I but began,
Give me that hand of yours to kiss.
PAUL. O, patience!
The statue is but newly fixed, the color's
Not dry. [90
CAM. My lord, your sorrow was too sore laid on,
Which sixteen winters cannot blow away,
So many summers dry: scarce any joy
Did ever so long live; no sorrow
But killed itself much sooner.
POL. Dear my brother,
Let him that was the cause of this have pow'r [99
To take off so much grief from you as he
Will piece up in himself.
PAUL. Indeed, my lord,
If I had thought the sight of my poor image
Would thus have wrought you—for the stone is mine—
I'd not have showed it.
LEON. Do not draw the curtain.
PAUL. No longer shall you gaze on't, lest your fancy [110
May think anon it moves.
LEON. Let be, let be!
Would I were dead, but that, methinks, already—
What was he that did make it? See, my lord,
Would you not deem it breathed, and that those veins
Did verily bear blood?
POL. Masterly done: [120
The very life seems warm upon her lip.
LEON. The fixure of her eye has motion in't,
As we are mocked with art.
PAUL. I'll draw the curtain;
My lord's almost so far transported that
He'll think anon it lives.
LEON. O sweet Paulina!
Make me to think so twenty years together: [130
No settled senses of the world can match
The pleasure of that madness. Let't alone.
PAUL. I am sorry, sir, I have thus far stirred you: but
I could afflict you further.
LEON. Do, Paulina;
For this affliction has a taste as sweet
As any cordial comfort. Still, methinks,
There is an air comes from her: what fine chisel [141
Could ever yet cut breath? Let no man mock me,
For I will kiss her.
PAUL. Good my lord, forbear.
The ruddiness upon her lip is wet:
You'll mar it if you kiss it; stain your own
With oily painting. Shall I draw the curtain? [150
LEON. No, not these twenty years.
PER. So long could I
Stand by, a looker-on.
PAUL. Either forbear,
Quit presently the chapel, or resolve you
For more amazement. If you can behold it,
I'll make the statue move—indeed, descend,
And take you by the hand; but then you'll think— [161
Which I protest against—I am assisted
By wicked powers.
LEON. What you can make her do,
I am content to look on: what to speak,
I am content to hear; for 'tis as easy
To make her speak as move.
PAUL. It is required
You do awake your faith. Then, all stand still; [170
Or[10] those that think it is unlawful business
I am about, let them depart.
LEON. Proceed:

[10] B, on.

No foot shall stir.
PAUL. Music, awake her: strike!—
[*Music.*
'Tis time; descend; be stone no more; approach;
Strike all that look upon with marvel. Come; [181
I'll fill your grave up: stir; nay, come away;
Bequeath to death your numbness, for from him
Dear life redeems you.—You perceive, she stirs. [HERMIONE *comes down.*
Start not; her actions shall be holy as
You hear my spell is lawful: do not shun her, [190
Until you see her die again, for then
You kill her double. Nay, present your hand:
When she was young you wooed her; now in age
Is she become the suitor.
LEON., *embracing her.* O, she's warm.
If this be magic, let it be an art
Lawful as eating.
POL. She embraces him. [200
CAM. She hangs about his neck:
If she pertain to life, let her speak too.
POL. Ay; and make't manifest where she has lived,
Or how stol'n from the dead.
PAUL. That she is living,
Were it but told you, should be hooted at
Like an old tale; but it appears she lives,
Though yet she speak not. Mark a little while.— [210
Please you to interpose, fair madam: kneel,
And pray your mother's blessing.—Turn, good lady;
Our Perdita is found. [*Presenting* PERDITA, *who kneels to* HERMIONE.
HER. You gods, look down,
And from your sacred vials pour your graces
Upon my daughter's head!—Tell me, mine own, [221
Where hast thou been preserved? where lived? how found
Thy father's court? for thou shalt hear that I,
Knowing by Paulina that the oracle
Gave hope thou wast in being, have preserved
Myself to see the issue. [229
PAUL. There's time enough for that;
Lest they desire upon this push to trouble
Your joys with like relation.—Go together,
You precious winners all: your exultation
Partake to every one. I, an old turtle,
Will wing me to some withered bough, and there
My mate, that's never to be found again,
Lament, till I am lost.
LEON. O! peace, Paulina! [240
Thou shouldst a husband take by my consent,
As I by thine a wife: this is a match,
And made between's by vows. Thou hast found mine;
But how is to be questioned; for I saw her,
As I thought, dead, and have in vain said many
A prayer upon her grave. I'll not seek far— [251
For him, I partly know his mind—to find thee
An honorable husband.—Come, Camillo,
And take her by the hand, whose worth and honesty
Is richly noted and here justified
By us, a pair of kings.—Let's from this place.—
What! look upon my brother! Both [260 your pardons,
That e'er I put between your holy looks
My ill suspicion. This, your son-in-law,
And son unto the king, whom heavens directing,
Is troth-plight to your daughter. Good Paulina,
Lead us from hence, where we may leisurely [269
Each one demand and answer to his part
Performed in this wide gap of time since first
We were dissevered: hastily lead away.
[*Exeunt.*

THE DUCHESS OF MALFI

BY

JOHN WEBSTER

INTRODUCTION

This extraordinarily beautiful play was first published in 1623, other editions following in 1640 and 1678. It was presented at the Blackfriars and the Globe by the King's men, and it is to be noted that the original quarto claims to be "the perfect and exact Coppy, with diverse things Printed that the length of the Play would not beare in the Presentment." Save for one song, the authorship of which Webster disclaimed, there is no sign of any other hand but his, yet the play is obviously not all of one date. There is in I a reference to the Concini murder that gives a date subsequent to April, 1617; but that can only have been a late insertion, made probably for a revival that year, since the play was certainly on the boards as early as 1614, Ostler, one of the original performers, dying on December 16 of that year. It can be pretty certainly dated, by various allusions, 1613.

The main source is Bandello's twenty-sixth novel; but the basis is fact. The Duchess was Joanna (Giovanna) of Aragon, who was regent of the duchy, her son by her first husband being a minor.

The play obviously belongs, like "Hamlet," to the tragedy of blood and revenge. Every Elizabethan dramatist, save Heywood, from Kyd onwards, and from Shakespeare downwards, ended tragedy in a shambles. The modern mode of ending on a note of interrogation was beyond the conception of Elizabethan audiences, and perhaps of Elizabethan dramatists, and the tragedy of the spirit, more terrible than the physical tragedy, was as yet unborn. Had a play ended with the prospect of a slow tragedy to be painfully worked out by the master-artist Time, it would have been regarded as entirely unsatisfactory. General slaughter was the simplest way of bringing everything to an end, without any possibility of misconception.

A great deal of stress has been laid upon the horrors in this play; but it is to be noted that Webster never descends to the physical horror, such as we get in "Lear" or in "Titus Andronicus" or in many another Elizabethan drama; his horrors are mental. He does not put out eyes, or tear out tongues, or chop off hands: instead, much less crudely, he breaks the spirit of his victims, shatters their moral sense, forces them into the gulf of insanity on the edge of which they are shivering. In that respect at least, he is more modern than Shakespeare or any other of his contemporaries.

His mastery of pity, if less recognized, is no less profound than his mastery of terror. That his imagination was morbid is unquestionable, and it is easy to give illustrations of it; but what of the other side of him? What of the sweetness and tenderness shown in passages such as that wherein the Duchess and her husband speak their last farewells? It is hard to understand how anyone can read the scenes between husband and wife and retain the idea that Webster was nothing but a gloomy and gruesome writer. They are among the most tender and beautiful scenes in all dramatic literature.

The portrayal of the Aragonian brethren and Bosola has been the subject of much eulogy; but there seems to have been little or no appreciation of the delineation of the Duchess; yet with what absolute perfection she is depicted! It is Webster's especial glory to have been great where few men are great—in the understanding and portrayal of women. It is not too much to say that in this respect he stands beside Shakespeare and Middleton, Meredith and Hardy and Henry James. For the conception of the character of the Duchess as she is presented to us, Webster must receive full credit: of the loveliness of her personality the original gives no hint. Webster, with the eye of the true artist, realized that for the purpose of his play she must be an altogether sympathetic character; so that he transformed her, as he had previously transformed the mother and brother of Flamineo and Vittoria from abettors to objectors. To realize what a charming figure he has made of her, one need only turn to that scene in which she exercises her regal privilege to choose a husband, and note how her active intelligence is set off by the more slow-moving mentality of her honest, decent, reliable, but somewhat commonplace steward, how her confident courage contrasts with his timid hesitancy, till he is driven to say, in a not unworthy realization of her superiority:

> These words should be mine,
> And all the words you have spoke.

Most striking of all her characteristics is the retention of her queenly calm, which leaves her only once or twice. It is one of Webster's profoundest triumphs that throughout all her sufferings she remains "Duchess of Malfi still"; and how magnificently subtle is the one brief transient breakdown of her glorious self-control, when, after saying philosophically:

> I know death hath ten thousand several doors
> For men to take their exits; and 'tis found
> They go on such strange geometrical hinges
> You may open them both ways,

she suddenly flashes out—

> . . . any way, for Heaven sake,
> So I were out of your whispering!

We cannot help feeling that she was justified in saying:

> Whether I am doomed to live or die,
> I can do both like a prince.

Ever, throughout, she remains the duchess no less than the woman, the woman no less than the duchess. She is a masterpiece, sufficient—were genius always sure of recognition—to ensure for John Webster a place among our very greatest dramatists.

Of the three male villains, the conception is in every case excellent, but the delineation indistinct, inconsistent. The brothers are very powerfully and illuminatingly described; but the description is in neither case borne out in speech or action. Probably the author liked his phrasal characterization of them and would not sacrifice what he had written, even when the characters developed differently, as they took possession of him and determined what they were to be.

Something of the same is to be said in respect of Bosola. He is described three or four times; but no two of the descriptions tally, and the man proves to be other than anything he is credited with being. He is, he remains, for all the praise bestowed upon his portrayal by some of the best of English critics, a shadow. It is never clear—to this writer, at least—when his pity and anger are genuine, when they are mere hypocrisy, and when they are to be regarded as the pose of a man who wishes to relieve his mind, to ease his conscience, or to satisfy his love of railing. We are shown illuminating glimpses of the inner man, but we cannot feel sure that that inner man is any more real than the outer man. Bosola is a remarkable psychological study; but, like many we meet in life, he baffles us. If his penitence is as real as it seems to be, we yet do not perceive how it has been arrived at. In all these characters, indeed, the dramatist shows wonderful psychological insight. With extraordinary cleverness, based on a knowledge of human nature, he makes them betray themselves. He lights up momentarily the recesses of a soul, and immediately the blackness of night closes in upon it once more. One has something of that same quality in Ford.

Throughout the play he shows himself the master dramatist. Consider the scene in the Duchess's bedchamber, where Antonio and Cariola play their child's trick upon her, and note how their playful mood heightens the horror that follows. Consider too that quick, deft touch that makes Ferdinand, right on the heels of the Duchess's declaration that she will know how to die, thrust a dagger into her hand, with

the words "Die then, quickly." Consider again the splendid cunning with which Bosola worms from the Duchess her secret; the fine contrast between the way in which the Duchess meets her death and the way the faithful maid meets hers; the superb craftsmanship whereby Ferdinand, his bloody work done, displays his first touch of compassion, and then upbraids Bosola for not having shown pity—but that is much more than craftsmanship: it is a manifestation of an intimate knowledge of the intricate workings of the human mind. So too of the dying woman's heed for her children and thought for the disposal of her body: each is not only profoundly true, but has a very definite dramatic value, as any intelligent reader must inevitably recognize. And, if we speak of craftsmanship, we must not overlook the Duchess's wonderful momentary revival after her strangling. Impossible? Probably; but how intensely gripping! Not even the similar temporary recovery of Desdemona is so dramatic. And let not anyone fail to note how the Duchess, who has borne all her terrible torture with a proud disdain and never demeaned herself to beg for pity, does, when she is brought back from the deep forgetfulness of death, breathe a cry for mercy before her eyes close forever. Sinking into the arms of Death, more than half unconscious, she utters the word that must have been near her lips many a time, but to which her unconquerable, if somewhat passive, spirit, would never permit her to give voice. No finer touch is to be found in any tragedy than that; and its full beauty is seen in the light of that single breakdown of her self-control to which reference has already been made—a supremely dramatic, because subtly truthful, touch, since it is a manifestation of the nervous impatience that must have underlain her queenly dignity.

There is more than one inconsistency in the play—notably the finale's overlooking of the Duchess's son by a former husband. Considering what a careful worker Webster was in many respects, it is strange to have him blundering here and there in his story. The Duchess, for instance, could not have imagined she saw the dead bodies of her three children (in IV 1), when she had two of them with her, alive; but the blunder there is probably rather the printer's than the author's.

CHARACTERS

Ferdinand, *Duke of Calabria.*
Cardinal, *his brother.*
Antonio Bologna, *Steward of the Household to the Duchess.*
Delio, *his friend.*
Daniel de Bosola.
Castruccio, *an old Lord.*
Marquis of Pescara.
Count Malateste.
Roderigo.
Silvio.

Grisolan.
Doctor.
Duchess of Malfi.
Cariola, *her woman.*
Julia, *Castruccio's wife, and the Cardinal's mistress.*
Old Lady.
Madmen, Ladies, Three Young Children, Two Pilgrims, Executioners, Court Officers, and Attendants.

Place: *Italy.*
Time: *Early 16th Century.*

ACT ONE

Scene I

Delio *and* Antonio *meet in Amalfi, in the presence-chamber of the palace of the* Duchess. Delio *greets his friend, who has been away in France, and has returned only a few days prior to the opening of the play. It is morning.*

The Duchess *is at present enduring a visit from her two detestable and powerful brothers. She is a young widow who has made up her mind to marry again, as they are determined she shall not do.* [11

Delio. You are welcome to your country, dear Antonio;
You have been long in France, and you return
A very formal Frenchman in your habit.
How do you like the French court?
Ant. I admire it.
In seeking to reduce both state and people [20
To a fixed order, their judicious king
Begins at home; quits first his royal palace
Of flattering sycophants, of dissolute
And infamous persons—which he sweetly terms
His Master's master-piece, the work of heaven;
Considering duly that a prince's court
Is like a common fountain, whence should flow [31
Pure silver drops in general, but, if't chance
Some cursed example poison't near the head,
Death and diseases through the whole land spread.
And what is't makes this blessëd government
But a most provident council, who dare freely [41
Inform him the corruption of the times?
Though some o' th' court hold it presumptiön
To instruct princes what they ought to do,
It is a noble duty to inform them
What they ought to foresee.[1]—Here comes Bosola,
The only court-gall; yet I observe his [50 railing
Is not for simple love of piety:
Indeed, he rails at those things which he wants;
Would be as lecherous, covetous, or proud,
Bloody, or envious, as any man,
If he had means to be so.—Here's the cardinal. [59

Bosola *and the* Cardinal *enter severally. The former at once attaches himself to the churchman.*

Bos. I do haunt you still.

Card., *coldly, turning away.* So!

Bos. I have done you better service than to be slighted thus.—Miserable age, where only the reward of doing well is the doing of it! [68

Card. You enforce your merit too much.

Bos. I fell into the galleys in your service; where, for two years together, I wore two towels instead of a shirt, with a knot on the shoulder, after the fashion of a Roman mantle. Slighted thus! I will thrive some way. Blackbirds fatten best in hard weather; why not I in these dog-days?

Card. Would you could become honest!

Bos. With all your divinity do but direct me the way to it. I have known [80 many travel far for it, and yet return as arrant knaves as they went forth, because they carried themselves always

[1] prevent.

along with them.— [*Exit* Cardinal.

Are you gone? Some fellows, they say, are possessed with the devil; but this great fellow were able to possess the greatest devil, and make him worse. [88

Ant. He hath denied thee some suit?

Bos. He and his brother are like plum-trees that grow crooked over standing pools; they are rich and o'erladen with fruit, but none but crows, pies, and caterpillars feed on them. Could I be one of their flattering panders, I would hang on their ears like a horseleech, till I were full, and then drop off. I pray, leave me. Who would rely upon these miserable dependencies, in expectation to be advanced to-morrow? What creature ever fed worse than hoping Tantalus? Nor [101 ever died any man more fearfully than he that hoped for a pardon. There are rewards for hawks and dogs when they have done us service; but, for a soldier that hazards his limbs in a battle, nothing but a kind of geometry is his last supportation.

Delio. Geometry?

Bos. Ay, to hang in a fair pair of [110 slings, take his latter swing in the world upon an honorable pair of crutches, from hospital to hospital. Fare ye well, sir: and yet do not you scorn us; for places in the court are but like beds in the hospital, where this man's head lies at that man's foot, and so lower and lower. [*Exit.*

Delio. I knew this fellow seven years in the galleys [120
For a notorious murder; and 'twas thought
The cardinal suborned it: he was released
By the French general, Gaston de Foix,
When he recovered Naples.

Ant. 'Tis great pity
He should be thus neglected: I have heard [129
He's very valiant. This foul melancholy
Will poison all his goodness; for, I'll tell you,
If too immoderate sleep be truly said
To be an inward rust unto the soul,
It then doth follow want of action
Breeds all black malcontents; and their close rearing,
Like moths in cloth, do hurt for want of wearing. [139

Enter Silvio *(a visitor from Milan),* Castruccio, Julia, Roderigo, *and* Grisolan.

Delio. The presence 'gins to fill: you promised me
To make me the partaker of the natures
Of some of your great courtiers.

Ant. The lord cardinal's
And other strangers' that are now in court?
I shall. Here comes the great Calabrian duke. [151

Enter Ferdinand *and Attendants.*

Ferd. Who took the ring[2] oftenest?

Sil. Antonio Bologna, my lord.

Ferd. Our sister duchess' great master of her household? Give him the jewel.— When shall we leave this sportive action and fall to action indeed?

Cast. Methinks, my lord, you should not desire to go to war in person. [160

Ferd. <Now for some gravity.> Why, my lord?

Cast. It is fitting a soldier arise to be a prince, but not necessary a prince descend to be a captain.

Ferd. No?

Cast. No, my lord; he were far better do it by a deputy.

Ferd. Why should he not as well sleep or eat by a deputy? This might take [170 idle, offensive, and base office from him, whereas the other deprives him of honor.

Cast. Believe my experience, that realm is never long in quiet where the ruler is a soldier.

Ferd. Thou told'st me thy wife could not endure fighting.

Cast. True, my lord.

Ferd. And of a jest she broke of a captain she met full of wounds: I have forgot it. [181

Cast. She told him, my lord, he was

[2] In the sport of tilting at the ring.

a pitiful fellow, to lie, like the children of Ismael, all in tents.[3]

FERD. Why, there's a wit were able to undo all the chirurgeons[4] o' th' city; for, although gallants should quarrel and had drawn their weapons and were ready to go to it, yet her persuasions would make them put up.

CAST. That she would, my lord.—How do you like my Spanish gennet?[5]

ROD. He is all fire.

FERD. I am of Pliny's opinion, I think he was begot by the wind; he runs as if he were ballassed[6] with quicksilver.

SIL. True, my lord, he reels from the tilt often.

ROD. AND GRIS. Ha, ha, ha!

FERD. Why do you laugh? Methinks you that are courtiers should be my touch-wood, take fire when I give fire; that is, laugh when I laugh, were the subject never so witty.

CAST. True, my lord: I myself have heard a very good jest, and have scorned to seem to have so silly a wit as to understand it.

FERD. But I can laugh at your fool, my lord.

CAST. He cannot speak, you know; but he makes faces. My lady cannot abide him.

FERD. No?

CAST. Nor endure to be in merry company; for she says too full laughing and too much company fills her too full of the wrinkle.

FERD. I would, then, have a mathematical instrument made for her face, that she might not laugh out of compass. —I shall shortly visit you at Milan, Lord Silvio.

SIL. Your grace shall arrive most welcome.

FERD. You are a good horseman, Antonio: you have excellent riders in France; what do you think of good horsemanship?

ANT. Nobly, my lord: as out of the Grecian horse issued many famous princes, so out of brave horsemanship arise the first sparks of growing resolution, that raise the mind to noble action.

FERD. You have bespoke it worthily.

SIL. Your brother, the lord cardinal, and sister duchess.

Enter CARDINAL, *with* DUCHESS, *and* CARIOLA.

CARD. Are the galleys come about?

GRIS. They are, my lord.

FERD. Here's the Lord Silvio is come to take his leave. [SILVIO *and the* CARDINAL *greet one another and engage in conversation.*

DELIO. <Now, sir, your promise: what's that cardinal?
I mean his temper. They say he's a brave fellow,
Will play his five thousand crowns at tennis, dance,
Court ladies, and one that hath fought single combats.

ANT. Some such flashes superficially hang on him for form; but observe his inward character: he is a melancholy churchman; the spring in his face is nothing but the engendering of toads; where he is jealous of any man, he lays worse plots for them than ever was imposed on Hercules, for he strews in his way flatterers, panders, intelligencers, atheists, and a thousand such political monsters. He should have been Pope; but, instead of coming to it by the primitive decency of the church, he did bestow bribes so largely and so impudently as if he would have carried it away without heaven's knowledge. Some good he hath done—

DELIO. You have given too much of him. What's his brother?

ANT. The duke there? A most perverse and turbulent nature.
What appears in him mirth is merely outside;
If he laugh heartily, it is to laugh
All honesty out of fashion.

DELIO. Twins?

ANT. In quality.
He speaks with others' tongues, and hears men's suits
With others' ears; will seem to sleep o' th' bench

[3] bandages. [4] surgeons.
[5] horse. [6] ballasted.

Only to entrap offenders in their answers;
Dooms men to death by information;
Rewards by hearsay.
DELIO. Then the law to him
Is like a foul, black cobweb to a spider:
He makes it his dwelling and a prison
To entangle those shall feed him. [291
ANT. Most true.
He never pays debts unless they be shrewd turns,
And those he will confess that he doth owe.
Last, for his brother there, the cardinal,
They that do flatter him most say oracles
Hang at his lips; and verily I believe them, [300
For the devil speaks in them.
But, for their sister, the right noble duchess,
You never fixed your eye on three fair medals
Cast in one figure, of so different temper.
For her discourse, it is so full of rapture,
You only will begin then to be sorry
When she doth end her speech, and wish, in wonder, [310
She held it less vain-glory to talk much,
Than your penance to hear her. Whilst she speaks,
She throws upon a man so sweet a look
That it were able to raise one to a galliard [7]
That lay in a dead palsy, and to dote
On that sweet countenance; but in that look [319
There speaketh so divine a continence
As cuts off all lascivious and vain hope.
Her days are practised in such noble virtue,
That sure her nights, nay, more, her very sleeps,
Are more in heaven than other ladies' shrifts.
Let all sweet ladies break their flattering glasses,
And dress themselves in her. [330
DELIO. Fie, Antonio!
You play the wire-drawer with her commendations.

[7] a lively dance.

ANT. I'll case the picture up: only thus much;
All her particular worth grows to this sum:
She stains [8] the time past, lights the time to come.>
CARI., *to* ANTONIO. You must attend my lady in the gallery, [341
Some half an hour hence.
ANT. I shall. [*Exeunt* ANTONIO *and* DELIO.
FERD. Sister, I have a suit to you.
DUCH. To me, sir?
FERD. A gentleman here, Daniel de Bosola,
One that was in the galleys—
DUCH. Yes, I know him. [350
FERD. A worthy fellow h'is: pray, let me entreat for
The provisorship of your horse.
DUCH. Your knowledge of him
Commends him and prefers him.
FERD. Call him hither.—[*Exit an Attendant.*
We [are] now upon parting. Good Lord Silvio,
Do us commend to all our noble friends
At the leaguer. [361
SIL. Sir, I shall.
DUCH. You are for Milan?
SIL. I am.
DUCH. Bring the caroches.—We'll bring you down
To the haven. [*Exeunt all save the two brothers.*
CARD. Be sure you entertain that Bosola [370
For your intelligence.[9] I would not be seen in't;
And therefore many times I have slighted him
When he did court our furtherance, as this morning.
FERD. Antonio, the great master of her household,
Had been far fitter. [379
CARD. You are deceived in him.
His nature is too honest for such business.—
He comes: I'll leave you. [*Exit.*

[8] overshadows.
[9] espionage service.

Re-enter Bosola.

Bos. I was lured to you.
Ferd. My brother, here, the cardinal, could never
Abide you.
Bos. Never since he was in my debt.
Ferd. May be some oblique character in your face
Made him suspect you.
Bos. Doth he study physiognomy?
There's no more credit to be given to th' face
Than to a sick man's urine, which some call
The physician's whore, because she cozens him.
He did suspect me wrongfully.
Ferd. For that
You must give great men leave to take their times.
Distrust doth cause us seldom be deceived.
You see the oft shaking of the cedar-tree
Fastens it more at root.
Bos. Yet take heed;
For to suspect a friend unworthily
Instructs him the next way to suspect you,
And prompts him to deceive you.
Ferd. There's gold.
Bos. So:
What follows? Never rained such showers as these
Without thunderbolts i' th' tail of them.
Whose throat must I cut?
Ferd. Your inclination to shed blood rides post
Before my occasion to use you. I give you that
To live i' th' court here, and observe the duchess;
To note all the particulars of her behavior,
What suitors do solicit her for marriage,
And whom she best affects. She's a young widow:
I would not have her marry again.
Bos. No, sir?
Ferd. Do not you ask the reason; but be satisfied.
I say I would not.
Bos. It seems you would create me
One of your familiars.
Ferd. Familiar! What's that?
Bos. Why, a very quaint invisible devil in flesh,
An intelligencer.[10]
Ferd. Such a kind of thriving thing
I would wish thee; and ere long thou mayst arrive
At a higher place by't.
Bos. Take your devils,
Which hell calls angels! These cursed gifts would make
You a corrupter, me an impudent traitor;
And, should I take these, they'd take me [to] hell.
Ferd. Sir, I'll take nothing from you that I have given.
There is a place that I procured for you
This morning, the provisorship o' th' horse;
Have you heard on't?
Bos. No.
Ferd. 'Tis yours: is't not worth thanks?
Bos. I would have you curse yourself now, that your bounty
(Which makes men truly noble) e'er should make me
A villain. O, that to avoid ingratitude
For the good deed you have done me, I must do
All the ill man can invent! Thus the devil
Candies all sins o'er: and what heaven terms vile
That names he complimental.
Ferd. Be yourself;
Keep your old garb of melancholy; 'twill express
You envy those that stand above your reach,
Yet strive not to come near 'em. This will gain
Access to private lodgings, where yourself
May, like a politic dormouse—
Bos. As I have seen some
Feed in a lord's dish, half asleep, not seeming

[10] spy.

To listen to any talk; and yet these rogues
Have cut his throat in a dream. What's my place?
The provisorship o' th' horse? Say, then, my corruption
Grew out of horse-dung: I am your creature.
FERD. Away! [*Exit.*
BOS. Let good men, for good deeds, covet good fame,
Since place and riches oft are bribes of shame.
Sometimes the devil doth preach.

SCENE II

In a gallery in the palace, on the evening of the same day, FERDINAND *and the* CARDINAL *are bidding farewell to the* DUCHESS, *who is attended by* CARIOLA.

CARD. We are to part from you; and your own discretion
Must now be your director.
FERD. You are a widow:
You know already what man is; and therefore
Let not youth, high promotion, eloquence—
CARD. No,
Nor anything without the addition, honor,
Sway your high blood.
FERD. Marry! They are most luxurious [11]
Will wed twice.
CARD. O fie!
FERD. Their livers are more spotted
Than Laban's sheep.
DUCH. Diamonds are of most value,
They say, that have passed through most jewellers' hands.
FERD. Whores by that rule are precious.
DUCH. Will you hear me?
I'll never marry.
CARD. So most widows say;
But commonly that motion [12] lasts no longer
Than the turning of an hour-glass: the funeral sermon
And it end both together.
FERD. Now hear me:
You live in a rank pasture, here, i' th' court.
There is a kind of honey-dew that's deadly;
'Twill poison your fame; look to't. Be not cunning;
For they whose faces do belie their hearts
Are witches ere they arrive at twenty years,
Ay, and give the devil suck.
DUCH., *sarcastically.* This is terrible good counsel.
FERD. Hypocrisy is woven of a fine small thread,
Subtler than Vulcan's engine; [13] yet, believe't,
Your darkest actions, nay, your privat'st thoughts,
Will come to light.
CARD. You may flatter yourself,
And take your own choice; privately be married
Under the eaves of night—
FERD. Think't the best voyage
That e'er you made; like the irregular crab,
Which, though't goes backward, thinks that it goes right
Because it goes its own way: but observe,
Such weddings may more properly be said
To be executed than celebrated.
CARD. The marriage night
Is the entrance into some prison.
FERD. And those joys,
Those lustful pleasures, are like heavy sleeps
Which do fore-run man's mischief.
CARD. Fare you well.
Wisdom begins at the end: remember it.
[*Exit.*
DUCH. I think this speech between you both was studied,
It came so roundly off.
FERD. You are my sister.
This was my father's poniard, do you see?

[11] lascivious.
[12] intention.
[13] The net in which he caught Venus and Mars.

I'd be loth to see't look rusty, 'cause
'twas his.
I would have you give o'er these charge-
able revels:
A visor and a mask are whispering-rooms
That were never built for goodness (fare
ye well); [91
And women like that part which, like the
lamprey,
Hath nev'r a bone in't.
DUCH. Fie, sir!
FERD. Nay,
I mean the tongue; variety of courtship.
What cannot a neat knave with a smooth
tale [99
Make a woman believe? Farewell, lusty
widow! [*Exit.*
DUCH. Shall this move me? If all my
royal kindred
Lay in my way unto this marriäge,
I'd make them my low footsteps. And
even now,
Even in this hate, as men in some great
battles,
By apprehending danger, have achieved
Almost impossible actions (I have [110
heard soldiers say so),
So I through frights and threatenings
will assay
This dangerous venture. Let old wives
report
I winked and chose a husband.—Cariola,
To thy known secrecy I have given up
More than my life—my fame.
CARI. Both shall be safe;
For I'll conceal this secret from the world
As warily as those that trade in poison [121
Keep poison from their children.
DUCH. Thy protestation
Is ingenious and hearty; I believe it.
Is Antonio come?
CARI. He attends you.
DUCH. Good dear soul,
Leave me; but place thyself behind the
arras,
Where thou may'st overhear us. Wish
me good speed; [131
For I am going into a wilderness,
Where I shall find nor path nor friendly
clue
To be my guide.

[CARIOLA *admits* ANTONIO, *and then goes behind the arras.*
I sent for you: sit down;
Take pen and ink, and write: are you
ready? [140
ANT. Yes.
DUCH. What did I say?
ANT. That I should write somewhat.
DUCH. O, I remember.
After [these] triumphs and this large ex-
pense,
It's fit, like thrifty husbands,[14] we in-
quire
What's laid up for to-morrow.
ANT. So please your beauteous excel-
lence. [151
DUCH. Beauteous!
Indeed, I think you. I look young for
your sake;—
You have ta'en my cares upon you.
ANT. I'll fetch your grace
The particulars of your revenue and ex-
pense.
DUCH. O, you are [159
An upright treasurer, but you mistook;
For, when I said I meant to make in-
quiry
What's laid up for to-morrow, I did mean
What's laid up yonder for me.
ANT. Where?
DUCH. In heaven.
I am making my will (as 'tis fit princes
should,
In perfect memory); and, I pray, sir,
tell me, [170
Were not one better make it smiling,
thus,
Than in deep groans and terrible ghastly
looks,
As if the gifts we parted with procured[15]
That violent distraction?
ANT. O, much better.
DUCH. If I had a husband now, this
care were quit:
But I intend to make you overseer. [180
What good deed shall we first remember?
Say.
ANT. Begin with that first good deed
began i' th' world
After man's creation, the sacrament of
marriage.

[14] housekeepers. [15] produced.

I'd have you first provide for a good husband;
Give him all.
DUCH. All! [190
ANT. Yes, your excellent self.
DUCH. In a winding-sheet?
ANT. In a couple.
DUCH. Saint Winifred, that were a strange will!
ANT. 'Twere strange[r] if there were no will in you
To marry again.
DUCH. What do you think of marriage?
ANT. I take't, as those that deny purgatory, [201
It locally contains or heaven or hell;
There's no third place in't.
DUCH. How do you affect it?
ANT. My banishment, feeding my melancholy,
Would often reason thus:—
DUCH. Pray, let's hear it.
ANT. Say a man never marry, nor have children, [210
What takes that from him? Only the bare name
Of being a father, or the weak delight
To see the little wanton ride a-cock-horse
Upon a painted stick, or hear him chatter
Like a taught starling.
DUCH. Fie, fie! what's all this?
One of your eyes is blood-shot; use my ring to't: [220
They say 'tis very sovereign. 'Twas my wedding-ring;
And I did vow never to part with it
But to my second husband.
ANT. You have parted with it now.
DUCH. Yes, to help your eye-sight.
ANT. You have made me stark blind.
DUCH. How?
ANT. There is a saucy and ambitious devil [230
Is dancing in this circle.
DUCH. Remove him.
ANT. How?
DUCH. There needs small conjuration, when your finger
May do it: thus. Is it fit? [*She puts the ring upon his finger: he kneels.*
ANT. What said you?
DUCH. Sir,
This goodly roof of yours is too low built; [241
I cannot stand upright in't, nor discourse,
Without I raise it higher. Raise yourself;
Or, if you please, my hand to help you: [*Gives him her hand. He rises.*] So!
ANT. Ambition, madam, is a great man's madness,
That is not kept in chains and close-pent rooms, [251
But in fair lightsome lodgings, and is girt
With the wild noise of prattling visitants,
Which makes it lunatic beyond all cure.
Conceive not I am so stupid but I aim[16]
Whereto your favors tend: but he's a fool
That, being a-cold, would thrust his hands i' th' fire
To warm them. [260
DUCH. So, now the ground's broke,
You may discover what a wealthy mine
I make you lord of.
ANT. O my unworthiness!
DUCH. You were ill to sell yourself:
This darkening of your worth is not like that
Which tradesmen use i' th' city; their false lights [269
Are to rid bad wares off; and I must tell you,
If you will know where breathes a cómplete man
(I speak it without flattery), turn your eyes,
And progress through yourself.
ANT. Were there nor heaven nor hell,
I should be honest: I have long served virtue, [279
And nev'r ta'en wages of her.
DUCH. Now she pays it.
The misery of us that are born great!
We are forced to woo, because none dare woo us;
And, as a tyrant doubles with his words
And fearfully equivocates, so we

[16] comprehend.

Are forced to express our violent passiöns
In riddles and in dreams, and leave the path
Of simple virtue, which was never made
To seem the thing it is not. Go, go brag
You have left me heartless: mine is in your bosom.
I hope 'twill multiply love there. You do tremble:
Make not your heart so dead a piece of flesh
To fear more than to love me. Sir, be confident:
What is't distracts you? This is flesh and blood, sir;
'Tis not the figure cut in alabaster
Kneels at my husband's tomb. Awake, awake, man!
I do here put off all vain ceremony,
And only do appear to you a young widow
That claims you for her husband, and, like a widow,
I use but half a blush in't.

ANT. Truth speak for me;
I will remain the constant sanctuary
Of your good name.

DUCH. I thank you, gentle love;
And 'cause you shall not come to me in debt,
Being now my steward, here upon your lips
I sign your *Quietus est*. This you should have begged now.
I have seen children oft eat sweetmeats thus,
As fearful to devour them too soon.

ANT. But for your brothers?

DUCH. Do not think of them:
All discord without this circumference
Is only to be pitied, and not feared;
Yet, should they know it, time will easily
Scatter the tempest.

ANT. These words should be mine,
And all the parts you have spoke, if some part of it
Would not have savored flattery.

DUCH. Kneel.

[*He kneels.* CARIOLA *comes from behind the arras.*

ANT., *rising.* Ha!

DUCH. Be not amazed: this woman's of my counsel.
I have heard lawyers say, a contract in a chamber
Per verba [*de*] *presenti* is absolute marriage. [*She and* ANTONIO *kneel.*
Bless, heaven, this sacred gordian,[17] which let violence
Never untwine.

ANT. And may our sweet affections, like the spheres,
Be still in motion!

DUCH. Quickening, and make
The like soft music!

ANT. That we may imitate the loving palms,
Best emblem of a peaceful marriäge,
That never bore fruit, divided!

DUCH. What can the church force more?

ANT. That fortune may not know an accident,
Either of joy or sorrow, to divide
Our fixëd wishes!

DUCH. How can the church build faster?[18]
We now are man and wife, and 'tis the church
That must but echo this.—Maid, stand apart.—
I now am blind.

ANT. What's your conceit in this?

DUCH. I would have you lead your fortune by the hand
Unto your marriage-bed
(You speak in me this, for we now are one).
We'll only lie and talk together, and plot
T' appease my humorous[19] kindred; and, if you please,
Like the old tale in "Alexander and Lodowick,"
Lay a naked sword between us, keep us chaste.
O, let me shroud my blushes in your bosom,

[17] knot.
[18] firmer.
[19] cantankerous.

Since 'tis the treasury of all my secrets!
[*Exeunt* Duchess *and* Antonio.
Cari. Whether the spirit of greatness or of woman
Reign most in her, I know not; but it shows [391
A fearful madness. I owe her much of pity.

ACT TWO

Scene I

Some months have passed. Bosola *has become suspicious that the* Duchess *is pregnant, and, in his capacity of spy in the employ of* Ferdinand, *resolves to ascertain the truth. He is talking to* Castruccio *in an apartment in the palace. He is carrying a bag. It is dusk.*

Bos. You say you would fain be taken for an eminent courtier?

Cast. 'Tis the very main of my ambition. [11

Bos. Let me see: you have a reasonable good face for't already; and your night-cap expresses your ears sufficient largely. I would have you learn to twirl the strings of your band with a good grace, and, in a set speech, at th' end of every sentence, to hum three or four times, or blow your nose till it smart again, to recover your memory. When [20 you come to be a president in criminal causes, if you smile upon a prisoner, hang him; but if you frown upon him and threaten him, let him be sure to scape the gallows.

Cast. I would be a very merry president.

Bos. Do not sup a' nights; 'twill beget you an admirable wit. [29

Cast. Rather it would make me have a good stomach to quarrel; for they say your roaring boys eat meat seldom, and that makes them so valiant. But how shall I know whether the people take me for an eminent fellow?

Bos. I will teach a trick to know it: give out you lie a-dying; and, if you hear the common people curse you, be sure you are taken for one of the prime night-caps.[1] [40

Enter an Old Lady.

You come from painting now.

Old Lady. From what?

Bos. Why, from your scurvy face-physic. To behold thee not painted inclines somewhat near a miracle. These in thy face here were deep ruts and foul sloughs the last progress.[2] There was a lady in France that, having had the small-pox, flayed the skin off her face, [50 to make it more level; and, whereas before she looked like a nutmeg-grater, after she resembled an abortive hedge-hog.

Old Lady. Do you call this painting?

Bos. No, no, but call [it] careening[3] of an old morphewed[4] lady, to make her disembogue again: there's rough-cast phrase to your plastic.

Old Lady. It seems you are well acquainted with my closet. [61

Bos. One would suspect it for a shop of witchcraft, to find in it the fat of serpents, spawn of snakes, Jews' spittle, and their young children's ordure; and all these for the face. I would sooner eat a dead pigeon, taken from the soles of the feet of one sick of the plague, than kiss one of you fasting. Here are two of you, whose sin of your youth is [70 the very patrimony of the physician; makes him renew his foot-cloth with the spring, and change his high-priced courtesan with the fall of the leaf. I do wonder you do not loathe yourselves. Observe my meditation now.

What thing is in this outward form of man
To be beloved? We account it ominous,
If nature do produce a colt or lamb, [80
A fawn or goat, in any limb resembling
A man, and fly from't as a prodigy:
Man stands amazed to see his deformity
In any other creature but himself;
But, in our own flesh though we bear diseases

[1] magistrates. [2] royal journey.
[3] repairing. [4] scabbed.

Which have their true names only ta'en from beasts
(As the most ulcerous wolf[5] and swinish measle),
Though we are eaten up of lice and worms,
And though continually we bear about us
A rotten and dead body, we delight
To hide it in rich tissue: all our fear,
Nay, all our terror, is, lest our physician
Should put us in the ground to be made sweet.—
Your wife's gone to Rome.—You two couple, and get you to the wells at Lucca, to recover your aches. I have other work on foot. [*Exeunt* CASTRUCCIO *and Old Lady.*
I observe our duchess
Is sick a-days, she pukes, her stomach seethes,
The fins of her eye-lids look most teeming[6] blue,
She wanes i' th' cheek, and waxes fat i' th' flank,
And, contrary to our Italian fashion,
Wears a loose-bodied gown: there's somewhat in't.
I have a trick may chance discover it,
A pretty one; I have bought some apricocks,
The first our spring yields.

ANTONIO *and* DELIO *come in, talking of the great news the latter has just heard.*

DELIO. <And so long since married?
You amaze me.
ANT. Let me seal your lips for ever;
For, did I think that anything but th' air
Could carry these words from you, I should wish
You had no breath at all.> Now, sir, in your contemplation?
You are studying to become a great wise fellow?

Bos. O, sir, the opinion of wisdom is a foul tetter that runs all over a man's body: if simplicity direct us to have no evil, it directs us to a happy being; for the subtlest folly proceeds from the subtlest wisdom. Let me be simply honest.

ANT. I do understand your inside.
Bos. Do you so?
ANT. Because you would not seem to appear to th' world
Puffed up with your preferment, you continue
This out-of-fashion melancholy: leave it, leave it.

Bos. Give me leave to be honest in any phrase, in any compliment whatsoever. Shall I confess myself to you? I look no higher than I can reach: they are the gods that must ride on winged horses. A lawyer's mule of a slow pace will both suit my disposition and business; for, mark me, when a man's mind rides faster than his horse can gallop, they quickly both tire.

ANT. You would look up to heaven; but I think
The devil, that rules i' th' air, stands in your light.

Bos. O, sir, you are lord of the ascendant, chief man with the duchess: a duke was your cousin-german removed. Say you were lineally descended from King Pepin, or he himself, what of this? Search the heads of the greatest rivers in the world, you shall find them but bubbles of water. Some would think the souls of princes were brought forth by some more weighty cause than those of meaner persons: they are deceived; there's the same hand to them; the like passions sway them; the same reason that makes a vicar go to law for a tithe-pig and undo his neighbors makes them spoil a whole province and batter down goodly cities with the cannon.

Enter DUCHESS *and Ladies.*

DUCH. Your arm, Antonio: do I not grow fat?
I am exceeding short-winded.—Bosola,
I would have you, sir, provide for me a litter;
Such a one as the Duchess of Florence rode in.
Bos. The duchess used one when she was great with child.

[5] Lupus. [6] pregnant.

DUCH. I think she did.—[*To one of the Ladies.*] Come hither, mend my ruff. [*The lady endeavors to do so.*
Here, when? thou art such a tedious lady; [191
And thy breath smells of lemon-pills: would thou hadst done!
Shall I swoon under thy fingers? I am
So troubled with the mother! [7]
BOS. <I fear, too much.>
DUCH. I have heard you say that the French courtiërs
Wear their hats on 'fore the king.
ANT. I have seen it. [200
DUCH. In the presence?
ANT. Yes.
DUCH. Why should not we bring up that fashiön?
'Tis ceremony more than duty that consists
In the removing of a piece of felt.
Be you the example to the rest o' th' court;
Put on your hat first. [210
ANT. You must pardon me:
I have seen, in colder countries than in France,
Nobles stand bare to th' prince; and the distinction
Methought showed reverently.
BOS., *opening his bag.* I have a present for your grace.
DUCH. For me, sir?
BOS. Apricocks, madam. [220
DUCH. O, sir, where are they?
I have heard of none to-year.
BOS. <Good; her color rises.>
DUCH. Indeed, I thank you: they are wondrous fair ones.
What an unskilful fellow is our gardener!
We shall have none this month.
[*She proceeds to eat the fruit.*
BOS. Will not your grace pare them?
DUCH. No: they taste of musk, methinks; indeed they do. [231
BOS. I know not: yet I wish your grace had pared 'em.
DUCH. Why?
BOS. I forgot to tell you, the knave gardener,
Only to raise his profit by them the sooner,
Did ripen them in horse-dung. [239
DUCH. O, you jest!—
[*To* ANTONIO.] You shall judge: pray, taste one.
ANT. Indeed, madam,
I do not love the fruit.
DUCH. Sir, you are loth
To rob us of our dainties. 'Tis a delicate fruit;
They say they are restorative.
BOS. 'Tis a pretty art,
This grafting. [250
DUCH. 'Tis so; a bettering of nature.
BOS. To make a pippin grow upon a crab,
A damson on a black-thorn. <How greedily she eats them!
A whirlwind strike off these bawd farthingales!
For, but for that and the loose-bodied gown, [259
I should have discovered apparently [8]
The young springal cutting a caper in her belly.>
DUCH. I thank you, Bosola: they were right good ones,
If they do not make me sick.
ANT. How now, madam!
DUCH. This green fruit and my stomach are not friends:
How they swell me! [269
BOS. <Nay, you are too much swelled already.>
DUCH. O, I am in an extreme cold sweat!
BOS. I am very sorry. [*Exit.*
DUCH. Lights to my chamber! <O good Antonio,
I fear I am undone!>
DELIO. Lights there, lights!
[*Exeunt* DUCHESS *and Ladies.*
ANT. O my most trusty Delio, we [280 are lost!
I fear she's fallen in labor; and there's left
No time for her remove.
DELIO. Have you prepared
Those ladies to attend her, and procured

[7] hysteria.

[8] plainly.

That politic safe conveyance for the midwife
Your duchess plotted? [289
ANT. I have.
DELIO. Make use, then, of this forced occasion.
Give out that Bosola hath poisoned her
With these apricocks; that will give some color
For her keeping close.
ANT. Fie, fie, the physicians
Will then flock to her.
DELIO. For that you may pretend
She'll use some prepared antidote of her own, [301
Lest the physicians should re-poison her.
ANT. I am lost in amazement: I know not what to think on't.

SCENE II

A little later. BOSOLA *is alone in a hall in the palace.*

BOS. So, so! there's no question but her techiness[9] and most vulturous eating of the apricocks are apparent signs of breeding.—

The OLD LADY *of the previous scene enters hurriedly, on her way across the hall; but* BOSOLA *has no intention of permitting her to pass by without her having a few words with him, and so stops her.* [11

OLD LADY, *fuming.* I am in haste, sir.
BOS. There was a young waiting-woman had a monstrous desire to see the glass-house—
OLD LADY. Nay, pray, let me go.
BOS. And it was only to know what strange instrument it was should swell up a glass to the fashion of a woman's belly. [20
OLD LADY. I will hear no more of the glass-house. You are still abusing women!
BOS. Who? I? No; only by the way now and then mention your frailties. The orange-tree bears ripe and green fruit and blossoms all together; and some of you give entertainment for pure love, but more for more precious reward. The lusty spring smells well; but drooping [30 autumn tastes well. If we have the same golden showers that rained in the time of Jupiter the thunderer, you have the same Danaës still, to hold up their laps to receive them. Didst thou never study the mathematics?
OLD LADY. What's that, sir?
BOS. Why, to know the trick how to make a many lines meet in one centre. [*Releases her.*] Go, go, give your foster-daughters good counsel: tell them that [41 the devil takes delight to hang at a woman's girdle, like a false rusty watch, that she cannot discern how the time passes. [*Exit* OLD LADY.

As she passes out, GRISOLAN *and* RODERIGO *enter.* ANTONIO *and* DELIO *come in by another door.* ANTONIO *is very excited.*

ANT. Shut up the court-gates. [50
ROD. Why, sir? What's the danger?
ANT. Shut up the posterns presently,[10] and call
All the officers o' th' court.
GRIS. I shall instantly. [*Exit.*
ANT. Who keeps the key o' th' park-gate?
ROD. Forobosco.
ANT. Let him bring't presently.[10] [59

GRISOLAN *returns with the Officers of the Court. They chatter while* ANTONIO *and* DELIO *converse apart.*

1 SERV. O, gentlemen o' th' court, the foulest treason!
BOS. <If that these apricocks should be poisoned now,
Without my knowledge!>
1 SERV. There was taken even now a Switzer in the duchess' bed-chamber—
2 SERV. A Switzer! [70
1 SERV. With a pistol in his great codpiece.
BOS. Ha, ha, ha!
1 SERV. The codpiece was the case for't.
2 SERV. There was a cunning traitor. Who would have searched his codpiece?
1 SERV. True; if he had kept out of the ladies' chambers. And all the moulds of

[9] irritability.

[10] immediately.

his buttons were leaden bullets.
2 Serv. O wicked cannibal! A fire-
look in's codpiece! [81
1 Serv. 'Twas a French plot, upon my life.
2 Serv. To see what the devil can do!
Ant. All the officers here?
Servants. We are.
Ant. Gentlemen,
We have lost much plate you know; and but this evening
Jewels to the value of four thousand [90 ducats,
Are missing in the duchess' cabinet.
Are the gates shut?
Serv. Yes.
Ant. 'Tis the duchess' pleasure
Each officer be locked into his chamber
Till the sun-rising, and to send the keys
Of all their chests and of their outward doors
Into her bed-chamber. She is very sick.
Rod. At her pleasure. [101
Ant. She entreats you take't not ill: the innocent
Shall be the more approved by it.
Bos. Gentleman[11] o' th' wood-yard, where's your Switzer now?
1 Serv. By this hand, 'twas credibly reported by one o' th' black guard.
[*Exeunt all except* Antonio *and* Delio.
Delio. How fares it with the duchess?
Ant. She's exposed [111
Unto the worst of torture, pain and fear.
Delio. Speak to her all happy comfort.
Ant. How I do play the fool with mine own danger!
You are this night, dear friend, to post to Rome:
My life lies in your service.
Delio. Do not doubt me. [120
Ant. O, 'tis far from me; and yet fear presents me
Somewhat that looks like danger.
Delio. Believe it,
'Tis but the shadow of your fear, no more.
How superstitiously we mind our evils!
The throwing down salt, or crossing of a hare, [129
Bleeding at nose, the stumbling of a horse,
Or singing of a cricket, are of power
To daunt whole man in us. Sir, fare you well:
I wish you all the joys of a blest father;
And, for my faith, lay this unto your breast:
Old friends, like old swords, still are trusted best. [*Exit.*

Enter Cariola. [140

Cari. Sir, you are the happy father of a son:
Your wife commends him to you.
Ant. Blessëd comfort!—
For heaven sake, tend her well: I'll presently
Go set a figure for's nativity.[12] [*Exeunt.*

Scene III

Later the same night Bosola *enters the courtyard of the palace. He is carrying a dark lantern.*

Bos. Sure I did hear a woman shriek: list, ha!
And the sound came, if I received it right,
From the duchess' lodgings. There's some stratagem
In the confining all our courtiers
To their several wards: I must have part of it; [11
My intelligence will freeze else. [*A cry is heard.*] List, again!
It may be 'twas the melancholy bird,
Best friend of silence and of solitariness,
The owl, that screamed so.—Ha! Antonio!

Enter Antonio *with a candle, his sword drawn.*

Ant. I heard some noise.—Who's [20 there? What art thou? Speak.
Bos. Antonio, put not your face nor body
To such a forced expressiön of fear;
I am Bosola, your friend.
Ant. Bosola!—
<This mole does undermine me.>
Heard you not
A noise even now? [29

[11] All editions, "Gentlemen."

[12] cast his horoscope.

Bos. From whence?
Ant. From the duchess' lodging.
Bos. Not I: did you?
Ant. I did, or else I dreamed.
Bos. Let's walk towards it.
Ant. No: it may be 'twas
But the rising of the wind.
Bos. Very likely.
Methinks 'tis very cold, and yet you sweat:
You look wildly.
Ant. I have been setting a figure
For the duchess' jewels.
Bos. Ah, and how falls your question?
Do you find it radical?
Ant. What's that to you?
'Tis rather to be questioned what design,
When all men were commanded to their lodgings,
Makes you a night-walker.
Bos. In sooth, I'll tell you:
Now all the court's asleep, I thought the devil
Had least to do here; I came to say my prayers;
And, if it do offend you I do so,
You are a fine courtier.
Ant. <This fellow will undo me.>
You gave the duchess apricocks to-day:
Pray heaven they were not poisoned!
Bos. Poisoned! a Spanish fig
For the imputation!
Ant. Traitors are ever confident
Till they are discovered. There were jewels stol'n too.
In my conceit, none are to be suspected
More than yourself.
Bos. You are a false steward.
Ant. Saucy slave, I'll pull thee up by the roots.
Bos. May be the ruin will crush you to pieces.
Ant. You are an impudent snake indeed, sir:
Are you scarce warm, and do you show your sting?
You libel well, sir?
Bos. No, sir: copy it out,
And I will set my hand to't.
Ant. <My nose bleeds.
One that were superstitiöus would count
This ominous, when it merely comes by chance.
[*Looking at his handkerchief.*] Two letters, that are wrought here for my name,
Are drowned in blood.
Mere accident!>—For you, sir, I'll take order
I' th' morn you shall be safe. <'Tis that must color
Her lying-in.> Sir, this door you pass not:
I do not hold it fit that you come near
The duchess' lodgings, till you have quit yourself.—
<The great are like the base (nay, they are the same),
When they seek shameful ways to avoid shame.>
[*Exit.*
Bos. Antonio hereabout did drop a paper.—
[*Shedding a light from his lantern.*]
Some of your help, false friend. [*Picking up a paper.*] O, here it is!
What's here? a child's nativity calculated!
[*Reads.*
"The duchess was delivered of a son, 'tween the hours twelve and one in the night, Anno Dom. 1504."—that's this year—"decimo nono Decembris,"—that's this night—"taken according to the meridian of Malfi,"—that's our duchess: happy discovery!—"The lord of the first house being combust in the ascendant signifies short life; and Mars being in a human sign, joined to the tail of the Dragon, in the eighth house, doth threaten a violent death. *Caetera non scrutantur.*"
Why, now 'tis most apparent; this precise fellow
Is the duchess' bawd. I have it to my wish!
This is a parcel of intelligency[13]
Our courtiers were cased up for: it needs must follow
That I must be committed on pretence
Of poisoning her; which I'll endure and laugh at.
If one could find the father now! but that

[13] a piece of news.

Time will discover. Old Castruccio
I' th' morning posts to Rome: by him I'll send
A letter that shall make her brothers' galls
O'erflow their livers. This was a thrifty way! [14]
Though Lust do mask in ne'er so strange disguise, [140
She's oft found witty, but is never wise.

Scene IV

We are now transported to a room in the Cardinal's *palace in Rome.* Julia *is paying him a visit.*

Card. Sit: thou art my best of wishes. Prithee, tell me
What trick didst thou invent to come to Rome
Without thy husband?
Julia. Why, my lord, I told him
I came to visit an old anchorite [10
Here, for devotion.
Card. Thou art a witty false one—
I mean, to him.
Julia. You have prevailed with me
Beyond my strongest thoughts; I would not now
Find you inconstant.
Card. Do not put thyself
To such a voluntary torture, which proceeds [20
Out of your own guilt.
Julia. How, my lord!
Card. You fear
My constancy, because you have approved
Those giddy and wild turnings in yourself.
Julia. Did you e'er find them?
Card. Sooth, generally for women,
A man might strive to make glass malleable, [31
Ere he should make them fixed.
Julia. So, my lord.
Card. We had need go borrow that fantastic glass
Invented by Galileo the Florentine
To view another spacious world i' th' moon,
And look to find a constant woman there.
Julia, *vexed, and, in her vexation, shedding tears.* This is very well, my lord. [40
Card. Why do you weep?
Are tears your justification? The self-same tears
Will fall into your husband's bosom, lady,
With a loud protestation that you love him
Above the world. Come, I'll love you wisely; [50
That's jealously; since I am very certain
You cannot make me cuckold.
Julia. I'll go home
To my husband.
Card. You may thank me, lady,
I have taken you off your melancholy perch,
Bore you upon my fist, and showed you game,
And let you fly at it. I pray thee, kiss me. [61
When thou wast with thy husband, thou wast watched
Like a tame elephant—still you are to thank me.
Thou hadst only kisses from him and high feeding;
But what delight was that? 'Twas just like one
That hath a little fingering on the lute, [70
Yet cannot tune it—still you are to thank me.
Julia. You told me of a piteous wound i' th' heart
And a sick liver, when you wooed me first,
And spake like one in physic.
Card., *hearing a voice within.* Who's that?— [79

Enter Servant.

<Rest firm, for my affection to thee:
Lightning moves slow to't.>
Serv. Madam, a gentleman
That's come post from Malfi desires to see you.
Card. Let him enter: I'll withdraw. [*Exit.*
Serv. He says

[14] a clever dodge.

Your husband, old Castruccio, is come to Rome,
Most pitifully tired with riding post. [*Exit.*

Enter DELIO.

JULIA. <Signior Delio! 'tis one of my old suitors.>
DELIO. I was bold to come and see you.
JULIA. Sir, you are welcome.
DELIO. Do you lie here?
JULIA. Sure, your own experience
Will satisfy you no; our Roman prelates
Do not keep lodging for ladies.
DELIO. Very well:
I have brought you no commendations from your husband,
For I know none by him.
JULIA. I hear he's come to Rome.
DELIO. I never knew man and beast, of a horse and a knight,
So weary of each other. If he had had a good back,
He would have undertook to have borne his horse,
His breech was so pitifully sore.
JULIA. Your laughter
Is my pity.
DELIO. Lady, I know not whether
You want money; but I have brought you some.
JULIA. From my husband?
DELIO. No, from mine own allowance.
JULIA. I must hear the condition, ere I be bound to take it.
DELIO. Look on't, 'tis gold; hath it not a fine color?
JULIA. I have a bird more beautiful.
DELIO. Try the sound on't.
JULIA. A lute-string far exceeds it.
It hath no smell, like cassia or civet;
Nor is it physical,[15] though some fond doctors
Persuade us seethe['t] in cullises.[16] I'll tell you,
This is a creature bred by—

Re-enter SERVANT.

SERV. Your husband's come;
Hath delivered a letter to the Duke of Calabria
That, to my thinking, hath put him out of his wits. [*Exit.*
JULIA. Sir, you hear:
Pray, let me know your business and your suit
As briefly as can be.
DELIO. With good speed: I would wish you,
At such time as you are non-resident
With your husband, my mistress.
JULIA. Sir, I'll go ask my husband if I shall,
And straight return your answer. [*Exit.*
DELIO. Very fine!
Is this her wit or honesty that speaks thus?
I heard one say the duke was highly moved
With a letter sent from Malfi. I do fear
Antonio is betrayed. How fearfully
Shows his ambition now! Unfortunate fortune!
They pass through whirlpools, and deep woes do shun,
Who the event weigh ere the action's done.

SCENE V

To the CARDINAL, *in another room in his palace, enters* FERDINAND, *with* BOSOLA'S *letter in his hand.*

FERD. I have this night digged up a mandrake.[17]
CARD. Say you?
FERD. And I am grown mad with't.
CARD. What's the prodigy?
FERD., *handing him the letter.* Read there,—a sister damned: she's loose i' th' hilts;
Grown a notorious strumpet.
CARD. Speak lower.
FERD. Lower!
Rogues do not whisper't now, but seek to publish't
(As servants do the bounty of their lords)
Aloud; and with a covetous searching eye,
To mark who note them. O, confusion seize her!

[15] medicinal. [16] broths.

[17] The uprooting of the mandrake was supposed to cause madness.

She hath had most cunning bawds to serve her turn,
And more secure conveyances for lust
Than towns of garrison for service.
CARD. Is't possible?
Can this be certain?
FERD. Rhubarb, O, for rhubarb
To purge this choler! Here's the cursëd day [31
To prompt my memory; and here't shall stick
Till of her bleeding heart I make a sponge
To wipe it out.
CARD. Why do you make yourself
So wild a tempest?
FERD. Would I could be one,
That I might toss her palace 'bout her [40 ears,
Root up her goodly forests, blast her meads,
And lay her general territory as waste
As she hath done her honors.
CARD. Shall our blood,
The royal blood of Arragon and Castile,
Be thus attainted?
FERD. Apply desperate physic: [49
We must not now use balsamum, but fire,
The smarting cupping-glass, for that's the mean
To purge infected blood, such blood as hers.
There is a kind of pity in mine eye.—
I'll give it to my handkercher; [*wipes his eyes*] and, now 'tis here,
I'll bequeath this to her bastard.
CARD. What to do?
FERD. Why, to make soft lint for his mother's wounds, [61
When I have hewed her to pieces.
CARD. Cursëd creature!
Unequal nature, to place women's hearts
So far upon the left side!
FERD. Foolish men,
That e'er will trust their honor in a bark
Made of so slight weak bulrush as is woman,
Apt every minute to sink it! [70
CARD. Thus ignorance, when it hath purchased honor,
It cannot wield it.
FERD. Methinks I see her laughing:
Excellent hyena! Talk to me somewhat, quickly,
Or my imagination will carry me
To see her in the shameful act of sin.
CARD. With whom?
FERD. Happily with some strong-thighed bargeman, [81
Or one o' th' wood-yard that can quoit the sledge[18]
Or toss the bar, or else some lovely squire
That carries coals up to her privy lodgings.
CARD. You fly beyond your reason.
FERD. Go to, mistress!
'Tis not your whore's milk that shall quench my wild-fire, [90
But your whore's blood.
CARD. How idly shows this rage, which carries you,
As men conveyed by witches through the air,
On violent whirlwinds! This intemperate noise
Fitly resembles deaf men's shrill discourse,
Who talk aloud, thinking all other men
To have their imperfection. [101
FERD. Have not you
My palsy?
CARD. Yes, [but] I can be angry
Without this rupture. There is not in nature
A thing that makes man so deformed, so beastly,
As doth intemperate anger. Chide yourself. [110
You have divers men who never yet expressed
Their strong desire of rest but by unrest,
By vexing of themselves. Come, put yourself
In tune.
FERD. So I will only study to seem
The thing I am not. I could kill her now,
In you, or in myself; for I do think
It is some sin in us heaven doth revenge
By her. [121
CARD. Are you stark mad?
FERD. I would have their bodies

[18] throw the hammer.

Burnt in a coal-pit with the ventage stopped,
That their curs'd smoke might not ascend to heaven;
Or dip the sheets they lie in in pitch or sulphur,
Wrap them in't, and then light them like a match;
Or else to boil their bastard to a cullis,
And give't his lecherous father, to renew
The sin of his back.
CARD. I'll leave you.
FERD. Nay, I have done.
I am confident, had I been damned in hell,
And should have heard of this, it would have put me
Into a cold sweat. In, in; I'll go sleep.
Till I know who leaps my sister, I'll not stir:
That known, I'll find scorpions to string my whips,
And fix her in a general eclipse. [*Exit.*

ACT THREE

SCENE I

FERDINAND *is paying a long-overdue visit to his sister. We are now shown* ANTONIO *meeting* DELIO *in one of the apartments of the palace,* DELIO *having come to Amalfi in the train of the* DUKE. *It is evening. Much time must have elapsed, for the* DUCHESS *is now the mother of three children by* ANTONIO.

ANT. Our noble friend, my most beloved Delio!
O, you have been a stranger long at court!
Came you along with the Lord Ferdinand?
DELIO. I did, sir. And how fares your noble duchess?
ANT. Right fortunately well: she's an excellent
Feeder of pedigrees; since you last saw her,
She hath had two children more, a son and daughter.
DELIO. Methinks 'twas yesterday. Let me but wink,
And not behold your face (which to mine eye
Is somewhat leaner), verily I should dream
It were within this half hour.
ANT. You have not been in law, friend Delio,
Nor in prison, nor a suitor at the court,
Nor begged the reversion of some great man's place,
Nor troubled with an old wife, which doth make
Your time so insensibly hasten.
DELIO. Pray, sir, tell me,
Hath not this news arrived yet to the ear
Of the lord cardinal?
ANT. I fear it hath:
The Lord Ferdinand, that's newly come to court,
Doth bear himself right dangerously.
DELIO. Pray, why?
ANT. He is so quiet that he seems to sleep
The tempest out, as dormice do in winter.
Those houses that are haunted are most still
Till the devil be up.
DELIO. What say the common people?
ANT. The common rabble do directly say
She is a strumpet.
DELIO. And your graver heads,
Which would be politic, what censure they?
ANT. They do observe I grow to infinite purchase [1]
The left hand way, and all suppose the duchess
Would amend it, if she could; for, say they,
Great princes, though they grudge their officers
Should have such large and unconfinëd means
To get wealth under them, will not complain,
Lest thereby they should make them odious
Unto the people. For other obligation

[1] wealth.

Of love or marriage between her and me
They never dream of.
DELIO. The Lord Ferdinand
Is going to bed.

Enter DUCHESS, FERDINAND, *and Attendants.* [80

FERD. I'll instantly to bed,
For I am weary.—I am to bespeak
A husband for you.
DUCH. For me, sir! Pray, who is't?
FERD. The great Count Malateste.
DUCH. Fie upon him!
A count! He's a mere stick of sugar-candy;
You may look quite through him. When I choose [90
A husband, I will marry for your honor.
FERD. You shall do well in't.—How is't, worthy Antonio?
DUCH. But, sir, I am to have private conference with you
About a scandalous report is spread
Touching mine honor.
FERD. Let me be ever deaf to't:
One of Pasquil's paper-bullets,[2] court-calumny, [100
A pestilent air, which princes' palaces
Are seldom purged of. Yet, say that it were true,
I pour it in your bosom, my fixed love
Would strongly excuse, extenuate, nay, deny
Faults, were they apparent in you. Go, be safe
In your own innocency.
DUCH. <O blessed comfort! [110
This deadly air is purged.> [*Exeunt* DUCHESS, ANTONIO, DELIO, *and Attendants.*
FERD. Her guilt treads on
Hot-burning coulters.

Enter BOSOLA.

Now, Bosola,
How thrives our intelligence?
BOS. Sir, uncertainly:
'Tis rumored she hath had three bastards, but [121
By whom we may go read i' th' stars.
FERD. Why, some
Hold opinion all things are written there.
BOS. Yes, if we could find spectacles to read them.
I do suspect there hath been some sorcery
Used on the duchess.
FERD. Sorcery! to what purpose?
BOS. To make her dote on some desertless fellow [131
She shames to acknowledge.
FERD. Can your faith give way
To think there's power in potions or in charms
To make us love whether we will or no?
BOS. Most certainly.
FERD. Away! these are mere gulleries, horrid things [139
Invented by some cheating mountebanks
To abuse us. Do you think that herbs or charms
Can force the will? Some trials have been made
In this foolish practice; but the ingredients
Were lenative[3] poisons, such as are of force
To make the patient mad; and straight the witch [150
Swears by equivocation they are in love.
The witchcraft lies in her rank blood. This night
I will force confession from her. You told me
You had got, within these two days, a false key
Into her bed-chamber.
BOS. I have. [159
FERD. As I would wish.
BOS. What do you intend to do?
FERD. Can you guess?
BOS. No.
FERD. Do not ask, then:
He that can compass me and know my drifts
May say he hath put a girdle 'bout the world
And sounded all her quicksands.
BOS. I do not [170
Think so.
FERD. What do you think, then, pray?
BOS. That you

[2] lampoons.

[3] Lucas's suggested alteration for "lenitive."

Are your own chronicle too much, and grossly
Flatter yourself.
FERD. Give me thy hand; I thank thee:
I never gave pension but to flatterers,
Till I entertainëd thee. Farewell. [180
That friend a great man's ruin strongly checks
Who rails into his belief all his defects.

SCENE II

ANTONIO, *the* DUCHESS, *and* CARIOLA *are in the* DUCHESS' *bed-chamber a little later the same night.*

DUCH. Bring me the casket hither, and the glass.—
You get no lodging here to-night, my lord.
ANT. Indeed, I must persuade one.
DUCH. Very good: [9
I hope in time 'twill grow into a custom
That noblemen shall come with cap and knee
To purchase a night's lodging of their wives.
ANT. I must lie here.
DUCH. Must! You are a lord of misrule.
ANT. Indeed, my rule is only in the night. [19
DUCH. To what use will you put me?
ANT. We'll sleep together.
DUCH. Alas, what pleasure can two lovers find in sleep?
CARI. My lord, I lie with her often, and I know
She'll much disquiet you.
ANT. See, you are complained of.
CARI. For she's the sprawlingest bed-fellow.
ANT. I shall like her the better for that. [31
CARI. Sir, shall I ask you a question?
ANT. I pray thee, Cariola.
CARI. Wherefore still, when you lie with my lady, do you rise
So early?
ANT. Laboring men count the clock oft'nest, Cariola;
Are glad when their task's ended.
DUCH. I'll stop your mouth. [*Kisses him.* [41
ANT. Nay, that's but one; Venus had two soft doves
To draw her chariot; I must have another.— [*She kisses him again.*
When wilt thou marry, Cariola?
CARI. Never, my lord.
ANT. O, fie upon this single life! forgo it.
We read how Daphne, for her peevish [50 flight,[4]
Became a fruitless bay-tree; Syrinx turned
To the pale empty reed; Anaxarete
Was frozen into marble: whereas those
Which married or proved kind unto their friends
Were by a gracious influence transshaped
Into the olive, pomegranate, mulberry, [60
Became flowers, precious stones, or eminent stars.
CARI. This is a vain poetry: but, I pray you, tell me,
If there were proposed me wisdom, riches, and beauty,
In three several young men, which should I choose?
ANT. 'Tis a hard question. This was Paris' case, [70
And he was blind in't, and there was great cause;
For how was't possible he could judge right,
Having three amorous goddesses in view,
And they stark naked? 'Twas a motiön
Were able to benight the apprehension
Of the severest counsellor of Europe.
Now I look on both your faces so well formed, [80
It puts me in mind of a question I would ask.
CARI. What is't?
ANT. I do wonder why hard-favored ladies
For the most part keep worse-favored waiting-women
To attend them, and cannot endure fair ones.
DUCH. O, that's soon answered. [90

[4] B, "slight."

Did you ever in your life know an ill painter
Desire to have his dwelling next door to the shop
Of an excellent picture-maker? 'Twould disgrace
His face-making, and undo him. I prithee,
When were we so merry? My hair tangles. [100
ANT. <Pray thee, Cariola, let's steal forth the room,
And let her talk to herself: I have divers times
Served her the like, when she hath chafed extremely.
I love to see her angry. Softly, Cariola.>
[*They steal out on tiptoe.*
DUCH. Doth not the color of my hair 'gin to change? [110
When I wax gray, I shall have all the court
Powder their hair with arras, to be like me. [FERDINAND *enters behind her.*
You have cause to love me; I entered you into my heart
Before you would vouchsafe to call for the keys.
We shall one day have my brothers take you napping. [120
Methinks his presence, being now in court,
Should make you keep your own bed; but you'll say
Love mixed with fear is sweetest. I'll assure you,
You shall get no more children till my brothers
Consent to be your gossips. Have you lost your tongue? [130
'Tis welcome;
For know, whether I am doomed to live or die,
I can do both like a prince.
FERD., *giving her a poniard.* Die, then, quickly.
Virtue, where art thou hid? What hideous thing
Is it that doth eclipse thee? [139
DUCH. Pray, sir, hear me.
FERD. Or is it true thou art but a bare name,
And no essential thing?
DUCH. Sir—
FERD. Do not speak.
DUCH. No, sir; I will plant my soul in mine ears, to hear you.
FERD. O most imperfect light of human reason, [149
That mak'st [us] so unhappy to foresee
What we can least prevent! Pursue thy wishes,
And glory in them: there's in shame no comfort
But to be past all bounds and sense of shame.
DUCH. I pray, sir, hear me: I am married.
FERD. So!
DUCH. Happily[5] not to your liking; but, for that, [161
Alas, your shears do come untimely now
To clip the bird's wings that's already flown!
Will you see my husband?
FERD. Yes, if I could change
Eyes with a basilisk.
DUCH. Sure, you came hither
By his confederacy. [169
FERD. The howling of a wolf
Is music to thee, screech-owl: prithee, peace.—
Whate'er thou art that hast enjoyed my sister,
For I am sure thou hear'st me, for thine own sake
Let me not know thee. I came hither prepared
To work thy discovery; yet am now persuaded [180
It would beget such violent effects
As would damn us both. I would not for ten millions
I had beheld thee: therefore use all means
I never may have knowledge of thy name;
Enjoy thy lust still, and a wretched life,
On that condition.—And for thee, vild woman, [190
If thou do wish thy lecher may grow old

[5] Perhaps.

In thy embracements, I would have thee build
Such a room for him as our anchorites
To holier use inhabit. Let not the sun
Shine on him till he's dead; let dogs and monkeys
Only converse with him, and such dumb things
To whom nature denies use to sound his name;
Do not keep a paraquito, lest she learn it;
If thou do love him, cut out thine own tongue,
Lest it bewray him.

DUCH. Why might not I marry?
I have not gone about in this to create
Any new world or custom.

FERD. Thou art undone;
And thou hast ta'en that massy sheet of lead
That hid thy husband's bones, and folded it
About my heart.

DUCH. Mine bleeds for't.

FERD. Thine! thy heart!
What should I name't, unless a hollow bullet
Filled with unquenchable wild-fire?

DUCH. You are in this
Too strict; and, were you not my princely brother,
I would say, too wilful: my reputation
Is safe.

FERD. Dost thou know what reputation is?
I'll tell thee—to small purpose, since th' instruction
Comes now too late.
Upon a time Reputation, Love, and Death,
Would travel o'er the world; and it was concluded
That they should part, and take three several ways.
Death told them, they should find him in great battles,
Or cities plagued with plagues. Love gives them counsel
To inquire for him 'mongst unambitious shepherds,
Where dowries were not talked of, and sometimes
'Mongst quiet kindred that had nothing left
By their dead parents. "Stay," quoth Reputation,
"Do not forsake me; for it is my nature,
If once I part from any man I meet,
I am never found again." And so for you:
You have shook hands with Reputation,
And made him invisible. So, fare you well:
I will never see you more.

DUCH. Why should only I,
Of all the other princes of the world,
Be cased up, like a holy relic? I have youth
And a little beauty.

FERD. So you have some virgins
That are witches. I will never see thee more. [*Goes out the way he came.*

Re-enter ANTONIO, *with a pistol, and* CARIOLA.

DUCH. You saw this apparition?

ANT. Yes: we are
Betrayed. How came he hither? I should turn
This to thee, for that.

CAR. Pray, sir, do; and, when
That you have cleft my heart, you shall read there
Mine innocence.

DUCH. That gallery gave him entrance.

ANT. I would this terrible thing would come again,
That, standing on my guard, I might relate
My warrantable love. [*She shows the poniard.*] Ha! what means this?

DUCH. He left this with me—

ANT. And, it seems, did wish
You would use it on yourself.

DUCH. His action seemed
To intend so much.

ANT. This hath a handle to't,
As well as a point: turn it towards him, and
So fasten the keen edge in his rank gall.

[*Knocking within.* CARIOLA *goes to the door.*
How now! who knocks? More earthquakes?
DUCH. I stand
As if a mine beneath my feet were ready
To be blown up.
CARI. 'Tis Bosola. [299
DUCH., *to* ANTONIO. Away!
O misery! methinks unjust actions
Should wear these masks and curtains, and not we.
You must instantly part hence: I have fashioned it already.
[*Exit* ANTONIO *by one door.* CARIOLA *admits* BOSOLA *by another.*
Bos. The duke your brother is ta'en up in a whirlwind; [309
Hath took horse, and's rid post to Rome.
DUCH. So late?
Bos. He told me, as he mounted into th' saddle,
You were undone.
DUCH. Indeed, I am very near it.
Bos. What's the matter?
DUCH. Antonio, the master of our household,
Hath dealt so falsely with me in's accounts. [320
My brother stood engaged with me for money
Ta'en up of certain Neapolitan Jews,
And Antonio lets the bonds be forfeit.
Bos. Strange! <This is cunning.>
DUCH. And hereupon
My brother's bills at Naples are protested
Against. Call up our officers.
Bos. I shall [*Exit.* [329

Re-enter ANTONIO.

DUCH. The place that you must fly to is Ancona:
Hire a house there; I'll send after you
My treasure and my jewels. Our weak safety
Runs upon enginous[6] wheels: short syllables
Must stand for periods. I must now accuse you [339
Of such a feignëd crime as Tasso calls
Magnanima menzogna, a noble lie,
'Cause it must shield our honors.—Hark! they are coming.

Re-enter BOSOLA *and Officers.*

ANT. Will your grace hear me?
DUCH. I have got well by you; you have yielded me
A million of loss: I am like to inherit
The people's curses for your stewardship.
You had the trick in audit-time to be [350
sick,
Till I had signed your quietus; and that cured you
Without help of a doctor.—Gentlemen,
I would have this man be an example to you all;
So shall you hold my favor; I pray, let him;
For 'has done that, alas, you would not think of. [360
And, because I intend to be rid of him,
I mean not to publish.—Use your fortune elsewhere.
ANT. I am strongly armed to brook my overthrow,
As commonly men bear with a hard year.
I will not blame the cause on't; but do think
The necessity of my malevolent star
Procures this, not her humor. O, the inconstant [371
And rotten ground of service! You may see,
'Tis even like him that, in a winter night,
Takes a long slumber o'er a dying fire,
A-loth to part from't; yet parts thence as cold
As when he first sat down.
DUCH. We do confiscate,
Towards the satisfying of your accounts,
All that you have. [381
ANT. I am all yours; and 'tis very fit
All mine should be so.
DUCH. So, sir, you have your pass.
ANT. You may see, gentlemen, what 'tis to serve
A prince with body and soul. [*Exit.*
Bos. Here's an example for extortion: what moisture is drawn out of the sea, when foul weather comes, pours down and runs into the sea again. [391

[6] politic, crafty.

DUCH. I would know what are your opinions
Of this Antonio.

2 OFF.[7] He could not abide to see a pig's head gaping: I thought your grace would find him a Jew.

3 OFF. I would you had been his officer, for your own sake.

4 OFF. You would have had more [400 money.

1 OFF. He stopped his ears with black wool, and to those came to him for money said he was thick of hearing.

2 OFF. Some said he was an hermaphrodite, for he could not abide a woman.

4 OFF. How scurvy proud he would look when the treasury was full! Well, let him go. [409

1 OFF. Yes, and the chippings of the buttery fly after him, to scour his gold chain.

DUCH. Leave us.— [*Exeunt Officers.*
What do you think of these?

BOS. That these are rogues that in's prosperity,
But to have waited on his fortune, could have wished
His dirty stirrup riveted through their noses, [420
And followed after's mule, like a bear in a ring;
Would have prostituted their daughters to his lust,
Made their first-born intelligencers, thought none happy
But such as were born under his blest planet
And wore his livery. And do these lice drop off now? [430
Well, never look to have the like again:
He hath left a sort[8] of flattering rogues behind him;
Their doom must follow. Princes pay flatterers
In their own money: flatterers dissemble their vices;
And they dissemble their lies; that's justice.
Alas, poor gentleman! [440

DUCH. Poor! he hath amply filled his coffers.

BOS. Sure, he was too honest. Pluto,[9] the god of riches,
When he's sent by Jupiter to any man,
He goes limping, to signify that wealth
That comes on God's name comes slowly; but, when he's sent
On the devil's errand, he rides post and comes in by scuttles. [450
Let me show you what a most unvalued jewel
You have in a wanton humor thrown away,
To bless the man shall find him. He was an excellent
Courtier, and most faithful; a soldier that thought it
As beastly to know his own value too little [460
As devilish to acknowledge it too much.
Both his virtue and form deserved a far better fortune:
His discourse rather delighted to judge itself than show itself:
His breast was filled with all perfectiön,
And yet it seemed a private whispering-room,
It made so little noise of 't. [469

DUCH. But he was basely descended.

BOS. Will you make yourself a mercenary herald,
Rather to examine men's pedigrees than virtues?
You shall want[10] him:
For know, an honest statesman to a prince
Is like a cedar planted by a spring;
The spring bathes the tree's root, the grateful tree
Rewards it with his shadow: you have not done so. [481
I would sooner swim to the Bermoothes[11] on
Two politicians' rotten bladders, tied
Together with an intelligencer's heart-string,
Than depend on so changeable a prince's favor.
Fare thee well, Antonio! Since the malice of the world [490

[7] Has a first officer's speech dropped out?
[8] number.
[9] Plutus. [10] miss. [11] the Bermudas.

Would needs down with thee, it cannot be said yet
That any ill happened unto thee, considering thy fall
Was accompanied with virtue.
DUCH. O, you render me excellent music!
Bos. Say you?
DUCH. This good one that you speak of is my husband.
Bos. Do I not dream? Can this ambitious age
Have so much goodness in't as to prefer
A man merely for worth, without these shadows
Of wealth and painted honors? Possible?
DUCH. I have had three children by him.
Bos. Fortunate lady!
For you have made your private nuptial bed
The humble and fair seminary of peace.
No question but many an unbeneficed scholar
Shall pray for you for this deed, and rejoice
That some preferment in the world can yet
Arise from merit. The virgins of your land
That have no dowries shall hope your example
Will raise them to rich husbands. Should you want
Soldiers, 'twould make the very Turks and Moors
Turn Christians and serve you for this act.
Last, the neglected poets of your time,
In honor of this trophy of a man,
Raised by that curious engine, your white hand,
Shall thank you in your grave for't, and make that
More reverend than all the cabinets
Of living princes. For Antonio,
His fame shall likewise flow from many a pen,
When heralds shall want coats to sell to men.
DUCH. As I taste comfort in this friendly speech,
So would I find concealment.
Bos. O, the secret of my prince,
Which I will wear on th' inside of my heart!
DUCH. You shall take charge of all my coin and jewels,
And follow him; for he retires himself
To Ancona.
Bos. So.
DUCH. Whither, within few days,
I mean to follow thee.
Bos. Let me think:
I would wish your grace to feign a pilgrimage
To our Lady of Loretto, scarce seven leagues
From fair Ancona; so may you depart
Your country with more honor, and your flight
Will seem a princely progress, retaining
Your usual train about you.
DUCH. Sir, your direction
Shall lead me by the hand.
CARI. In my opinion,
She were better progress to the baths at Lucca,
Or go visit the Spa
In Germany; for, if you will believe me,
I do not like this jesting with religion,
This feigned pilgrimage.
DUCH. Thou art a superstitious fool:
Prepare us instantly for our departure.
Past sorrows, let us moderately lament them,
For those to come, seek wisely to prevent them. [*Exeunt* DUCHESS *and* CARIOLA.
Bos. A politician is the devil's quilted anvil;
He fashions all sins on him, and the blows
Are never heard: he may work in a lady's chamber,
As here for proof. What rests but I reveal
All to my lord? O, this base quality
Of intelligencer! Why, every quality i' th' world
Prefers but gain or commendatiön:

Now, for this act I am certain to be raised,
And men that paint weeds to the life are praised.

Scene III

The Cardinal, Ferdinand, Malateste, Pescara, Delio, *and* Silvio *are met in the* Cardinal's *palace in Rome, two or three days later.*

Card. Must we turn soldier, then?
Mal. The emperor,
Hearing your worth that way, ere you attained
This reverend garment, joins you in commission
With the right fortunate soldier the Marquis of Pescara
And the famous Lannoy.
Card. He that had the honor
Of taking the French king prisoner?
Mal. The same.
Here's a plot drawn for a new fortification
At Naples.

While the Cardinal, Pescara, *and* Malateste *are studying the plan, the others talk apart.*

Ferd. <This great Count Malateste, I perceive,
Hath got employment.
Delio. No employment, my lord;
A marginal note in the muster-book that he is
A voluntary lord.
Ferd. He's no soldier?
Delio. He has worn gunpowder in's hollow tooth for the tooth-ache.
Sil. He comes to the leaguer with a full intent
To eat fresh beef and garlic, means to stay
Till the scent be gone, and straight return to court. [Ferdinand *joins the* Cardinal.
Delio. He hath read all the late service
As the City Chronicle relates it,
And keeps two pewterers going, only to express
Battles in model.
Sil. Then he'll fight by the book.
Delio. By the almanac, I think,
To choose good days and shun the critical;
That's his mistress' scarf.
Sil. Yes, he protests
He would do much for that taffeta.
Delio. I think he would run away from a battle,
To save it from taking prisoner.
Sil. He is horribly afraid
Gunpowder will spoil the perfume on't.
Delio. I saw a Dutchman break his pate once
For calling him a pot-gun; he made his head
Have a bore in't like a musket.
Sil. I would he had made a touch-hole to't.
He is indeed a guarded sumpter-cloth,
Only for the remove of the court.>

Enter Bosola. *He goes straight to the* Cardinal *and* Ferdinand. Pescara *and* Malateste *join* Delio *and* Silvio.

Pes. <Bosola arrived! What should be the business?
Some falling-out among the cardinals.
These factions amongst great men, they are like
Foxes: when their heads are divided,
They carry fire in their tails, and all the country
About them goes to wrack for't.
Sil. What's that Bosola?
Delio. I knew him in Padua,—a fantastical scholar, like such who study to know how many knots was in Hercules' club, of what color Achilles' beard was, or whether Hector were not troubled with the tooth-ache. He hath studied himself half blear-eyed to know the true symmetry of Caesar's nose by a shoeing-horn; and this he did to gain the name of a speculative man.
Pes. Mark Prince Ferdinand:
A very salamander lives in's eye,
To mock the eager violence of fire.
Sil. That cardinal hath made more bad faces with his oppression than ever Michael Angelo made good ones. He

lifts up's nose, like a foul porpoise before a storm.

PES. The Lord Ferdinand laughs.

DELIO. Like a deadly cannon
That lightens ere it smokes.

PES. These are your true pangs of death,
The pangs of life that struggle with great statesmen.

DELIO. In such a deformed silence witches whisper their charms.>

CARD. Doth she make religion her riding-hood
To keep her from the sun and tempest?

FERD. That, that damns her. Methinks her fault and beauty,
Blended together, show like leprosy,
The whiter the fouler. I make it a question
Whether her beggarly brats were ever christened.

CARD. I will instantly solicit the state of Ancona
To have them banished.

FERD. You are for Loretto:
I shall not be at your ceremony; fare you well.—
Write to the Duke of Malfi, my young nephew
She had by her first husband, and acquaint him
With's mother's honesty.[12]

BOS. I will.

FERD. Antonio!
A slave that only smelled of ink and counters,
And never in's life looked like a gentleman,
But in the audit-time.—Go, go presently,
Draw me out an hundred and fifty of our horse,
And meet me at the foot-bridge.

[*Exit* BOSOLA.

SCENE IV

We see two PILGRIMS *at the Shrine of our Lady of Loretto.*

1 PIL. I have not seen a goodlier shrine than this;
Yet I have visited many.

2 PIL. The Cardinal of Arragon
Is this day to resign his cardinal's hat;
His sister duchess likewise is arrived
To pay her vow of pilgrimage. I expect
A noble ceremony.

1 PIL. No question.—They come.

[*The ceremony of the* CARDINAL'S *instalment in the habit of a soldier is performed. He delivers up his cross, hat, robes and ring at the shrine, and is invested with sword, helmet, shield, and spurs. Then* ANTONIO, *the* DUCHESS *and their children, having presented themselves at the shrine, are, by a form of banishment in dumb-show expressed towards them by the* CARDINAL *and the state of Ancona, banished: during all which ceremoney, this ditty*[13] *is sung, to very solemn music, by divers churchmen.*

Arms and honors deck thy story,
To thy fame's eternal glory!
Adverse fortune ever fly thee;
No disastrous fate come nigh thee!
I alone will sing thy praises,
Whom to honor virtue raises,
And thy study, that divine is,
Bent to martial discipline is.
Lay aside all those robes lie by thee;
Crown thy arts with arms, they'll beautify thee.

O worthy of worthiest name, adorned in this manner,
Lead bravely thy forces on under war's warlike banner!
O, mayst thou prove fortunate in all martial courses!
Guide thou still by skill in arts and forces!
Victory attend thee nigh, whilst fame sings loud thy powers;
Triumphant conquest crown thy head, and blessings pour down showers!

[*Exeunt all save the two* PILGRIMS.

1 PIL. Here's a strange turn of state! who would have thought
So great a lady would have matched herself
Unto so mean a person? Yet the cardinal
Bears himself much too cruel.

[12] morals.

[13] Its authorship is unknown. Webster disclaimed it.

2 Pil. They are banished.
1 Pil. But I would ask what power hath this state
Of Ancona to determine of a free prince?
2 Pil. They are a free state, sir, and her brother showed
How that the Pope, fore-hearing of her looseness,
Hath seized into the protection of the church
The dukedom which she held as dowager.
1 Pil. But by what justice?
2 Pil. Sure, I think by none,
Only her brother's instigatiön.
1 Pil. What was it with such violence he took
Off from her finger?
2 Pil. 'Twas her wedding-ring;
Which he vowed shortly he would sacrifice.
To his revenge.
1 Pil. Alas, Antonio!
If that a man be thrust into a well,
No matter who sets hand to't, his own weight
Will bring him sooner to th' bottom. Come, let's hence.
Fortune makes this conclusion general:
All things do help th' unhappy man to fall. [*Exeunt.*

Scene V

The Duchess, Antonio, *their three children,* Cariola *(who is carrying the youngest child), and Servants have gone a little way along the road from Loretto.*

Duch. Banished Ancona!
Ant. Yes, you see what power
Lightens in great men's breath.
Duch. Is all our train
Shrunk to this poor remainder?
Ant. These poor men,
Which have got little in your service, vow
To take your fortune: but your wiser buntings,
Now they are fledged, are gone.
Duch. They have done wisely.
This puts me in mind of death: physicians thus,
With their hands full of money, use to give o'er
Their patients.
Ant. Right the fashion of the world:
From decayed fortunes every flatterer shrinks;
Men cease to build where the foundation sinks.
Duch. I had a very strange dream to-night.
Ant. What was't?
Duch. Methought I wore my coronet of state,
And on a sudden all the diamonds
Were changed to pearls.
Ant. My interpretation
Is, you'll weep shortly; for to me the pearls
Do signify your tears.
Duch. The birds that live i' th' field
On the wild benefit of nature live
Happier than we; for they may choose their mates,
And carol their sweet pleasures to the spring.

Bosola *overtakes the party. He is the bearer of a letter, which he hands to the* Duchess.

Bos. You are happily o'erta'en.
Duch. From my brother?
Bos. Yes, from the Lord Ferdinand your brother
All love and safety.
Duch. Thou dost blanch mischief,
Wouldst make it white. See, see, like to calm weather
At sea before a tempest, false hearts speak fair
To those they intend most mischief.
"Send Antonio to me; I want his head in a business."—
A politic equivocatiön!
He doth not want your counsel, but your head;
That is, he cannot sleep till you be dead.
And here's another pitfall that's strewed o'er
With roses; mark it, 'tis a cunning one:
"I stand engaged for your husband for several debts at Naples: let not that trouble him; I had rather have his heart than his money."

And I believe so too. [70
Bos. What do you believe?
Duch. That he so much distrusts my husband's love
He will by no means believe his heart is with him
Until he see it: the devil is not cunning enough
To circumvent us in riddles.
Bos. Will you reject that noble and free league [80
Of amity and love which I present you?
Duch. Their league is like that of some politic kings,
Only to make themselves of strength and power
To be our after-ruin: tell them so.
Bos. And what from you?
Ant. Thus tell him; I will not come.
Bos. And what of this? [89
Ant. My brothers have dispersed
Bloodhounds abroad, which till I hear are muzzled,
No truce, though hatched with ne'er such politic skill,
Is safe, that hangs upon our enemies' will.
I'll not come at them.
Bos. This proclaims your breeding.
Every small thing draws a base mind to fear, [100
As the adamant draws iron. Fare you well, sir;
You shall shortly hear from's. [*Exit.*
Duch. I suspect some ambush;
Therefore by all my love I do conjure you
To take your eldest son, and fly towards Milan;
Let us not venture all this poor remainder
In one unlucky bottom. [110
Ant. You counsel safely.
Best of my life, farewell. Since we must part,
Heaven hath a hand in't; but no otherwise
Than as some curious artist takes in sunder
A clock or watch, when it is out of frame,
To bring't in better order. [120
Duch. I know not which is best,
To see you dead or part with you.—Farewell, boy:
Thou art happy that thou hast not understanding
To know thy misery; for all our wit
And reading brings us to a truer sense
Of sorrow.—In the eternal church, sir,
I do hope we shall not part thus.
Ant. O, be of comfort!
Make patiënce a noble fortitude, [131
And think not how unkindly we are used:
Man, like to cassia, is proved best, being bruised.
Duch. Must I, like to a slave-born Russian,
Account it praise to suffer tyranny?
And yet, O heaven, thy heavy hand is in't!
I have seen my little boy oft scourge his top, [141
And compared myself to't: naught made me e'er
Go right but heaven's scourge-stick.
Ant. Do not weep:
Heaven fashioned us of nothing; and we strive
To bring ourselves to nothing.—Farewell, Cariola, [149
And thy sweet armful.—[*To his wife.*]
If I do never see thee more,
Be a good mother to your little ones,
And save them from the tiger: fare you well.
Duch. Let me look upon you once more, for that speech
Came from a dying father. Your kiss is colder
Than that I have seen an holy anchorite
Give to a dead man's skull. [160
Ant. My heart is turned to a heavy lump of lead,
With which I sound my danger: fare you well. [Antonio *and his first-born depart.*
Duch. My laurel is all withered.
Cari. Look, madam, what a troop of armëd men
Make toward us! [169

Re-enter Bosola, *with a Guard.*

Duch. O, they are very welcome:

When Fortune's wheel is over-charged with princes,
The weight makes it move swift: I would have my ruin
Be sudden.—I am your adventure, am I not?
Bos. You are: you must see your husband no more. [179
Duch. What devil art thou that counterfeits heaven's thunder?
Bos. Is that terrible? I would have you tell me whether
Is that note worse that frights the silly birds
Out of the corn or that which doth allure them
To the nets? You have hearkened to the last too much.
Duch. O misery! like to a rusty [190 o'ercharged cannon,
Shall I never fly in pieces? Come, to what prison?
Bos. To none.
Duch. Whither, then?
Bos. To your palace.
Duch. I have heard
That Charon's boat serves to convey all o'er
The dismal lake, but brings none back again. [201
Bos. Your brothers mean you safety and pity.
Duch. Pity!
With such a pity men preserve alive
Pheasants and quails, when they are not fat enough
To be eaten.
Bos. These are your children?
Duch. Yes. [210
Bos. Can they prattle?
Duch. No:
But I intend, since they were born accursed,
Curses shall be their first language.
Bos. Fie, madam!
Forget this base, low fellow—
Duch. Were I a man,
I'd beat that counterfeit face into thy other. [220
Bos. One of no birth.
Duch. Say that he was born mean,
Man is most happy when's own actions
Be arguments and examples of his virtue.
Bos. A barren, beggarly virtue.
Duch. I prithee, who is greatest? Can you tell?
Sad tales befit my woe: I'll tell you one.
A salmon, as she swam unto the sea, [229
Met with a dog-fish, who encounters her
With this rough language: "Why art thou so bold,
To mix thyself with our high state of floods,
Being no eminent courtier, but one
That for the calmest and fresh time o' th' year
Dost live in shallow rivers, rank'st thyself
With silly smelts and shrimps? And [240 darest thou
Pass by our dog-ship without reverence?"
"O," quoth the salmon, "sister, be at peace:
Thank Jupiter we both have passed the net!
Our value never can be truly known,
Till in the fisher's basket we be shown:
I' th' market then my price may be the higher, [250
Even when I am nearest to the cook and fire."
So to great men the moral may be stretchëd;
Men oft are valued high, when th'are most wretched.
But come, whither you please. I am armed 'gainst misery,
Bent to all sways of the oppressor's will:
There's no deep valley but near some great hill. [*Exeunt.* [261

ACT FOUR

Scene I

The Duchess *has been taken to her palace in Amalfi, where she is kept a prisoner.* Ferdinand *is visiting the palace and makes inquiries of* Bosola *regarding her. He has not told his agent the horrors he has prepared for her. It is night. The well-lighted chamber in which they meet is one of the* Duchess' *suite of rooms.* [9

FERD. How doth our sister duchess bear herself
In her imprisonment?
BOS. Nobly: I'll describe her.
She's sad as one long used to't, and she seems
Rather to welcome the end of misery
Than shun it; a behaviör so noble
As gives a majesty to adversity:
You may discern the shape of loveliness
More perfect in her tears than in her smiles:
She will muse four hours together; and her silence,
Methinks, expresseth more than if she spake.
FERD. Her melancholy seems to be fortified
With a strange disdain.
BOS. 'Tis so; and this restraint,
Like English mastiffs that grow fierce with tying,
Makes her too passionately apprehend
Those pleasures she is kept from.
FERD. Curse upon her!
I will no longer study in the book
Of another's heart. Inform her what I told you. [*Exit.*

Almost immediately, by another door enter the DUCHESS *and Attendants.*

BOS. All comfort to your grace!
DUCH. I will have none.
Pray thee, why dost thou wrap thy poisoned pills
In gold and sugar?
BOS. Your elder brother, the Lord Ferdinand,
Is come to visit you, and sends you word,
'Cause once he rashly made a solemn vow
Never to see you more, he comes i' th' night;
And prays you gently neither torch nor taper
Shine in your chamber. He will kiss your hand,
And reconcile himself; but, for his vow,
He dares not see you.
DUCH. At his pleasure.—
Take hence the lights. [*Exeunt Attendants with lights.*

Enter FERDINAND.

<He's come.>
FERD. Where are you?
DUCH. Here, sir.
FERD. This darkness suits you well.
DUCH. I would ask you pardon.
FERD. You have it;
For I account it the honorabl'st revenge,
Where I may kill, to pardon.—Where are your cubs?
DUCH. Whom?
FERD. Call them your children;
For, though our national law distinguish bastards
From true legitimate issue, compassionate nature
Makes them all equal.
DUCH. Do you visit me for this?
You violate a sacrament o' th' church
Shall make you howl in hell for't.
FERD. It had been well
Could you have lived thus always; for, indeed,
You were too much i' th' light; but no more:
I come to seal my peace with you. Here's a hand [*gives her a dead man's hand*]
To which you have vowed much love; the ring upon't
You gave.
DUCH. I affectionately kiss it.
FERD. Pray, do, and bury the print of it in your heart.
I will leave this ring with you for a love-token;
And the hand as sure as the ring; and do not doubt
But you shall have the heart too. When you need a friend,
Send it to him that owed it; you shall see
Whether he can aid you.
DUCH. You are very cold:
I fear you are not well after your travel.—
Ha! lights!—O, horrible!
FERD. Let her have lights enough.
[*Exit. The Attendants bring back the lights.*

DUCH. What witchcraft doth he practise, that he hath left
A dead man's hand here? [*Here is discovered, behind a traverse, the artificial figures of* ANTONIO *and his first-born,*[1] *appearing as if they were dead.*
BOS. Look you, here's the piece from which 'twas ta'en. [119
He doth present you this sad spectacle,
That, now you know directly they are dead,
Hereafter you may wisely cease to grieve
For that which cannot be recovered.
DUCH. There is not between heaven and earth one wish
I stay for after this. It wastes me more
Than were't my picture, fashioned out of wax,
Stuck with a magical needle, and then buried [131
In some foul dunghill; and yon's an excellent property
For a tyrant, which I would account mercy.
BOS. What's that?
DUCH. If they would bind me to that lifeless trunk,
And let me freeze to death.
BOS. Come, you must live. [140
DUCH. That's the greatest torture souls feel in hell,
In hell, that they must live and cannot die.
Portia, I'll new kindle thy coals again,
And revive the rare and almost dead example
Of a loving wife.
BOS. O, fie! despair? Remember
You are a Christian. [150
DUCH. The church enjoins fasting:
I'll starve myself to death.
BOS. Leave this vain sorrow.
Things being at the worst begin to mend: the bee,
When he hath shot his sting into your hand,
May then play with your eye-lid.
DUCH. Good comfortable fellow,
Persuade a wretch that's broke upon the wheel [161
To have all his bones new set; entreat him live
To be executed again. Who must despatch me?
I account this world a tedious theatre,
For I do play a part in't 'gainst my will.
BOS. Come, be of comfort; I will save your life.
DUCH. Indeed, I have not leisure to tend so small a business. [171
BOS. Now, by my life, I pity you.
DUCH. Thou art a fool, then,
To waste thy pity on a thing so wretched
As cannot pity itself. [*For a few moments her mind seems on the point of giving way.*] I am full of daggers.
Puff, let me blow these vipers from me.

Enter SERVANT. [180

What are you?
SERV. One that wishes you long life.
DUCH. I would thou wert hanged for the horrible curse
Thou hast given me: [*Exit* SERVANT.] I shall shortly grow one
Of the miracles of pity. I'll go pray.—
No, I'll go curse.
BOS. O, fie! [189
DUCH. I could curse the stars—
BOS. O, fearful!
DUCH. And those three smiling seasons of the year
Into a Russian winter; nay, the world
To its first chaos.
BOS. Look you, the stars shine still.
DUCH. O, but you must
Remember, my curse hath a great way to go.—
Plagues, that make lanes through largest families, [201
Consume them!
BOS. Fie, lady!
DUCH. Let them, like tyrants,
Never be remembered but for the ill they have done;
Let all the zealous prayers of mortified churchmen
Forget them!

[1] All eds. "children"; but the Duchess has two of the three with her, and refers to two of them later.

Bos. O, uncharitable!
DUCH. Let Heaven
A little while cease crowning martyrs, to punish them!
Go, howl them this, and say, I long to bleed:
It is some mercy when men kill with speed. [*Exit.*

Re-enter FERDINAND.

FERD. Excellent, as I would wish! she's plagued in art.
These presentations are but framed in wax
By the curious master in that quality,
Vincentio Lauriola, and she takes them
For true substantial bodies.
Bos. Why do you do this?
FERD. To bring her to despair.
Bos. Faith, end here,
And go no farther in your cruelty:
Send her a penitential garment to put on
Next to her delicate skin, and furnish her
With beads and prayer-books.
FERD. Damn her! that body of hers,
While that my blood ran pure in't, was more worth
Than that which thou wouldst comfort, called a soul.
I will send her masques of common courtesans,
Have her meat served up by bawds and ruffiäns,
And, 'cause she'll needs be mad, I am resolved
To move forth the common hospital
All the mad folk, and place them near her lodging;
There let them practise together, sing and dance,
And act their gambols to the full o' th' moon:
If she can sleep the better for it, let her.
Your work is almost ended.
Bos. Must I see her again?
FERD. Yes.
Bos. Never.
FERD. You must.
Bos. Never in mine own shape;
That's forfeited by my intelligence
And this last cruel lie: when you send me next,
The business shall be comfort.
FERD. Very likely!
Thy pity is nothing of kin to thee. Antonio
Lurks about Milan: thou shalt shortly thither,
To feed a fire as great as my revenge,
Which never will slack till it hath spent his fuel:
Intemperate agues make physicians cruel.

SCENE II

FERDINAND *has established a number of madmen is the vicinity of the* DUCHESS' *lodging. The noise they make reaches the room in which the* DUCHESS *is talking to her faithful maid.*

DUCH. What hideous noise was that?
CARI. 'Tis the wild consort
Of madmen, lady, which your tyrant brother
Hath placed about your lodging. This tyranny,
I think, was never practised till this hour.
DUCH. Indeed, I thank him. Nothing but noise and folly
Can keep me in my right wits; whereas reason
And silence make me stark mad. Sit down;
Discourse to me some dismal tragedy.
CARI. O, 'twill increase your melancholy!
DUCH. Thou art deceived:
To hear of greater grief would lessen mine.
This is a prison?
CARI. Yes, but you shall live
To shake this durance off.
DUCH. Thou art a fool:
The robin-redbreast and the nightingale
Never live long in cages.
CARI. Pray, dry your eyes.
What think you of, madam?
DUCH. Of nothing;
When I muse thus, I sleep.
CARI. Like a madman, with your eyes open?

DUCH. Dost thou think we shall know one another
In th' other world? [39
CARI. Yes, out of question.
DUCH. O, that it were possible we might
But hold some two days' conference with the dead!
From them I should learn somewhat, I am sure,
I never shall know here. I'll tell thee a miracle:
I am not mad yet, to my cause of sorrow:
Th' heaven o'er my head seems made of molten brass, [51
The earth of flaming sulphur; yet I am not mad.
I am acquainted with sad misery
As the tanned galley-slave is with his oar;
Necessity makes me suffer constantly,
And custom makes it easy. Who do I look like now?
CARI. Like to your picture in the gallery, [61
A deal of life in show, but none in practice;
Or rather like some reverend monument
Whose ruins are even pitied.
DUCH. Very proper;
And Fortune seems only to have her eyesight
To behold my tragedy.—How now!
What noise is that? [70

Enter SERVANT.

SERV. I am come to tell you
Your brother hath intended you some sport.
A great physician, when the Pope was sick
Of a deep melancholy, presented him
With several sorts[2] of madmen, which wild object,
Being full of change and sport, forced [80 him to laugh,
And so th' imposthume broke: the self-same cure
The duke intends on you.
DUCH. Let them come in.

SERV. There's a mad lawyer; and a secular priest;
A doctor that hath forfeited his wits
By jealousy; an astrologian
That in his works said such a day o' th' month [91
Should be the day of doom, and, failing of't,
Ran mad; an English tailor crazed i' th' brain
With the study of new fashions; a gentleman-usher
Quite beside himself with care to keep in mind [99
The number of his lady's salutations
Or "How do you," she employed him in each morning;
A farmer, too, an excellent knave in grain,
Mad 'cause he was hindered transportation;[3]
And, let one broker that's mad loose to these,
You'd think the devil were among them.
DUCH. Sit, Cariola.—Let them loose when you please, [110
For I am chained to endure all your tyranny.

The SERVANT *opens the door, and eight* MADMEN *enter, one of whom sings this song to dismal music:*

O, let us howl some heavy note,
Some deadly dogged howl,
Sounding as from the threatening throat
Of beasts and fatal fowl! [119
As ravens, screech-owls, bulls, and bears,
We'll bell, and bawl our parts,
Till irksome noise have cloyed your ears
And corrosived your hearts.
At last, whenas our choir wants breath,
Our bodies being blest,
We'll sing, like swans, to welcome death,
And die in love and rest.

1 MAD. Doom's-day not come yet! I'll draw it nearer by a perspective, or [129 make a glass that shall set all the world on fire upon an instant. I cannot sleep; my pillow is stuffed with a litter of porcupines.

2 MAD. Hell is a mere glass-house, where the devils are continually blowing

[2] sets.

[3] the export of his grain.

up women's souls on hollow irons, and the fire never goes out.

3 Mad. I will lie with every woman in my parish the tenth night. I will tithe them over like hay-cocks. [140

4 Mad. Shall my 'pothecary out-go me, because I am a cuckold? I have found out his roguery: he makes alum of his wife's urine, and sells it to Puritans that have sore throats with over-straining.

1 Mad. I have skill in heraldry.

2 Mad. Hast?

1 Mad. You do give for your crest a woodcock's head with the brains [150 picked out on't; you are a very ancient gentleman.

3 Mad. Greek is turned Turk: we are only to be saved by the Helvetian translation.[4]

1 Mad. Come on, sir, I will lay the law to you.

2 Mad. O, rather lay a corrosive: the law will eat to the bone.

3 Mad. He that drinks but to satisfy nature is damned: [161

4 Mad. If I had my glass here, I would show a sight should make all the women here call me mad doctor.

1 Mad. What's he? A rope-maker?

2 Mad. No, no, no; a snuffling knave that, while he shows the tombs, will have his hand in a wench's placket.

3 Mad. Woe to the caroche that brought home my wife from the masque at [170 three o'clock in the morning! It had a large feather-bed in it.

4 Mad. I have pared the devil's nails forty times, roasted them in raven's eggs, and cured agues with them.

3 Mad. Get me three hundred milch-bats, to make possets, to procure sleep.

4 Mad. All the college may throw their caps at me: I have made a soap-boiler costive; it was my masterpiece. [180

The eight Madmen *dance to grotesque music, after which* Bosola, *disguised as an Old Man, enters.*

Duch. Is he mad too?

Serv. Pray, question him. I'll leave you. [*The* Servant *goes out, driving the* Madmen *before him.*

Bos. I am come to make thy tomb.

Duch. Ha! my tomb!
Thou speak'st as if I lay upon my death-bed, [191
Gasping for breath. Dost thou perceive me sick?

Bos. Yes, and the more dangerously, since thy sickness is insensible.

Duch. Thou art not mad, sure: dost know me?

Bos. Yes.

Duch. Who am I? [199

Bos. Thou art a box of worm-seed, at best but a salvatory of green mummy. What's this flesh? A little crudded[5] milk, fantastical puff-paste. Our bodies are weaker than those paper-prisons boys use to keep flies in; more contemptible, since ours is to preserve earth-worms. Didst thou ever see a lark in a cage? Such is the soul in the body: this world is like her little turf of grass, and the heaven o'er our heads, like her look- [210 ing-glass, only gives us a miserable knowledge of the small compass of our prison.

Duch. Am not I thy duchess?

Bos. Thou art some great woman, sure, for riot begins to sit on thy forehead (clad in gray hairs) twenty years sooner than on a merry milk-maid's. Thou sleep'st worse than if a mouse should be forced to take up her lodging in a cat's ear: a little infant that breeds its [220 teeth, should it lie with thee, would cry out, as if thou wert the more unquiet bed-fellow.

Duch. I am Duchess of Malfi still.

Bos. That makes thy sleep so broken:
Glories, like glow-worms, afar off shine bright,
But, looked to near, have neither heat nor light.

Duch. Thou art very plain. [230

Bos. My trade is to flatter the dead, not the living; I am a tomb-maker.

Duch. And thou com'st to make my tomb?

Bos. Yes.

[4] the Geneva Bible.

[5] curdled.

DUCH. Let me be a little merry:—of what stuff wilt thou make it?

BOS. Nay, resolve me first, of what fashion?

DUCH. Why, do we grow fantastical on our deathbed? [241
Do we affect fashion in the grave?

BOS. Most ambitiously. Princes' images on their tombs do not lie, as they were wont, seeming to pray up to heaven; but with their hands under their cheeks, as if they died of the tooth-ache. They are not carved with their eyes fixed upon the stars; but, as their minds were wholly bent upon the world, the self-same way they seem to turn their faces. [251

DUCH. Let me know fully therefore the effect
Of this thy dismal preparation,
This talk fit for a charnel.

BOS. Now I shall.

Enter Executioners, with a coffin, cords, and a bell.

Here is a present from your princely brothers; [260
And may it arrive welcome, for it brings
Last benefit, last sorrow.

DUCH. Let me see it:
I have so much obedience in my blood
I wish it in their veins to do them good.

BOS. This is your last presence-chamber.

CARI. O my sweet lady!

DUCH. Peace; it affrights not me.

BOS. I am the common bellman [270
That usually is sent to condemned persons
The night before they suffer.

DUCH. Even now thou said'st
Thou wast a tomb-maker.

BOS. 'Twas to bring you
By degrees to mortification. Listen:

Hark, now everything is still,
The screech-owl and the whistler shrill
Call upon our dame aloud, [280
And bid her quickly don her shroud!
Much you had of land and rent;
Your length in clay's now competent:
A long war disturbed your mind;
Here your perfect peace is signed.
Of what is't fools make such vain keeping?
Sin their conception, their birth weeping,
Their life a general mist of error,
Their death a hideous storm of terror.
Strew your hair with powders sweet, [290
Don clean linen, bathe your feet,
And (the foul fiend more to check)
A crucifix let bless your neck.
'Tis now full tide 'tween night and day;
End your groan, and come away.

CARI. Hence, villains, tyrants, murderers! Alas!
What will you do with my lady?—Call for help! [299

DUCH. To whom? To our next neighbors? They are mad-folks.

BOS. Remove that noise.

DUCH. Farewell, Cariola!
In my last will I have not much to give:
A many hungry guests have fed upon me;
Thine will be a poor reversion.

CARI. I will die with her.

DUCH. I pray thee, look thou giv'st my little boy [310
Some syrup for his cold, and let the girl
Say her prayers ere she sleep. [CARIOLA *is forced off by the Executioners.*
Now what you please:
What death?

BOS. Strangling; here are your executioners.

DUCH. I forgive them:
The apoplexy, catarrh, or cough o' th' lungs, [320
Would do as much as they do.

BOS. Doth not death fright you?

DUCH. Who would be afraid on't,
Knowing to meet such excellent company
In th' other world?

BOS. Yet, methinks,
The manner of your death should much afflict you:
This cord should terrify you. [329

DUCH. Not a whit:
What would it pleasure me to have my throat cut
With diamonds? or to be smothered
With cassia? or to be shot to death with pearls?
I know death hath ten thousand several doors
For men to take their exits; and 'tis found

They go on such strange geometrical hinges [341
You may open them both ways—any way, for heaven sake,
So I were out of your whispering. Tell my brothers
That I perceive death, now I am well awake,
Best gift is they can give or I can take.
I would fain put off my last woman's fault: [350
I'd not be tedious to you.
1 Execut. We are ready.
Duch. Dispose my breath how please you; but my body
Bestow upon my women, will you?
1 Execut. Yes.
Duch. Pull, and pull strongly, for your able strength
Must pull down heaven upon me.—
Yet stay: heaven-gates are not so highly arched [361
As princes' palaces; they that enter there
Must go upon their knees. [*Kneels.*]—Come, violent death,
Serve for mandragora to make me sleep!—
Go tell my brothers, when I am laid out,
They then may feed in quiet. [*They strangle her.* [370
Bos. Where's the waiting-woman? Fetch her.—Some other strangle the children. [*The Executioners go out. Two of them return with* Cariola.
Look you, there sleeps your mistress.
Cari. O, you are damned
Perpetually for this! My turn is next; Is't not so ordered?
Bos. Yes, and I am glad
You are so well prepared for't. [380
Cari. You are deceived, sir: I am not prepared for't; I will not die; I will first come to my answer,[6] and know
How I have offended.
Bos. Come, despatch her.—
You kept her counsel; now you shall keep ours.

[6] trial.

Cari., *struggling with the Executioners.* I will not die; I must not; I am contracted [391
To a young gentleman.
1 Execut., *trying to put the noose round her neck.* Here's your wedding-ring.
Cari. Let me but speak with the duke. I'll discover
Treason to his person.
Bos. Delays!—throttle her. [399
1 Execut. She bites and scratches.
Cari. If you kill me now, I am damned; I have not been at confession
This two years.
Bos., *to Executioners.* When?
Cari. I am quick with child.
Bos. Why, then,
Your credit's saved. [*Executioners strangle* Cariola. *The others enter with the bodies of the two* [410 *Children, strangled.*
Bear her into the next room;
Let these lie still. [*Exeunt Executioners with body of* Cariola.

Enter Ferdinand.

Ferd. Is she dead?
Bos. She is what
You'd have her. But here begin your pity: [*Shows the bodies of the Children.* [420
Alas, how have these offended?
Ferd. The death
Of young wolves is never to be pitied.
Bos., *pointing to the body of the* Duchess. Fix your eye here.
Ferd. Constantly.
Bos. Do you not weep?
Other sins only speak; murder shrieks out.
The element of water moistens the earth; [431
But blood flies upwards and bedews the heavens.
Ferd. Cover her face; mine eyes dazzle: she died young.
Bos. I think not so; her infelicity
Seemed to have years too many.
Ferd. She and I were twins;
And should I die this instant, I had lived

Her time to a minute.
Bos. It seems she was born first;
You have bloodily approved the ancient truth,
That kindred commonly do worse agree
Than remote strangers.
Ferd. Let me see her face
Again. Why didst thou not pity her? What
An excellent honest man mightst thou have been,
If thou hadst borne her to some sanctuary!
Or, bold in a good cause, opposed thyself,
With thy advancëd sword above thy head,
Between her innocence and my revenge!
I bade thee, when I was distracted of my wits,
Go kill my dearest friend, and thou hast done't.
For, let me but examine well the cause:
What was the meanness of her match to me?
Only I must confess I had a hope,
Had she continued widow, to have gained
An infinite mass of treasure by her death;
And that was the main cause—her marriäge,
That drew a stream of gall quite through my heart.
For thee, as we observe in tragedies
That a good actor many times is cursed
For playing a villain's part, I hate thee for't,
And, for my sake, say, thou hast done much ill well.
Bos. Let me quicken your memory, for I perceive
You are falling into ingratitude: I challenge
The reward due to my service.
Ferd. I'll tell thee
What I'll give thee.
Bos. Do.
Ferd. I'll give thee a pardon
For this murder.
Bos. Ha!
Ferd. Yes, and 'tis
The largest bounty I can study to do thee.
By what authority didst thou execute
This bloody sentence?
Bos. By yours.
Ferd. Mine! Was I her judge?
Did any ceremonial form of law
Doom her to not-being? Did a cómplete jury
Deliver her conviction up i' th' court?
Where shalt thou find this judgment registered,
Unless in hell? See, like a bloody fool,
Th' hast forfeited thy life, and thou shalt die for't.
Bos. The office of justice is perverted quite
When one thief hangs another. Who shall dare
To reveal this?
Ferd. O, I'll tell thee;
The wolf shall find her grave, and scrape it up,
Not to devour the corpse, but to discover
The horrid murder.
Bos. You, not I, shall quake for't.
Ferd. Leave me.
Bos. I will first receive my pension.
Ferd. You are a villain.
Bos. When your ingratitude
Is judge, I am so.
Ferd. O horror,
That not the fear of him which binds the devils
Can prescribe man obedience!—
Never look upon me more.
Bos. Why, fare thee well.
Your brother and yourself are worthy men!
You have a pair of hearts are hollow graves,
Rotten and rotting others; and your vengeance,
Like two chained bullets, still goes arm in arm.
You may be brothers; for treason, like the plague,
Doth take much in a blood. I stand like one

That long hath ta'en a sweet and golden dream:
I am angry with myself now, that I wake.
FERD. Get thee into some unknown part o' th' world,
That I may never see thee.
BOS. Let me know
Wherefore I should be thus neglected. Sir,
I served your tyranny, and rather strove
To satisfy yourself than all the world:
And, though I loathed the evil, yet I loved
You that did counsel it, and rather sought
To appear a true servant than an honest man.
FERD. I'll go hunt the badger by owl-light: 'tis a deed of darkness. [*Exit.*
BOS. He's much distracted. Off, my painted honor!
While with vain hopes our faculties we tire,
We seem to sweat in ice and freeze in fire.
What would I do, were this to do again?
I would not change my peace of conscience
For all the wealth of Europe. She stirs; here's life.—
Return, fair soul, from darkness, and lead mine
Out of this sensible hell!— She's warm, she breathes.—
Upon thy pale lips I will melt my heart,
To store them with fresh color.—Who's there?
Some cordial drink!—Alas! I dare not call:
So pity would destroy pity.—Her eye opes,
And heaven in it seems to ope, that late was shut,
To take me up to mercy.
DUCH. Antonio!
BOS. Yes, madam, he is living;
The dead bodies you saw were but feigned statues.
He's reconciled to your brothers; the Pope hath wrought
The atonement.
DUCH. Mercy! [*Dies.*
BOS. O, she's gone again! there the cords of life broke.
O sacred innocence, that sweetly sleeps
On turtles' feathers, whilst a guilty conscience
Is a black register wherein is writ
All our good deeds and bad, a perspective
That shows us hell! That we cannot be suffered
To do good when we have a mind to it!
This is manly sorrow;
These tears, I am very certain, never grew
In my mother's milk. My estate is sunk
Below the degree of fear: where were
These penitent fountains while she was living?
O, they were frozen up! Here is a sight
As direful to my soul as is the sword
Unto a wretch hath slain his father. Come,
I'll bear thee hence,
And execute thy last will; that's, deliver
Thy body to the reverend dispose
Of some good women: that the cruel tyrant
Shall not deny me. Then I'll post to Milan,
Where somewhat I will speedily enact
Worth my dejection. [*Exit with the body.*

ACT FIVE

SCENE I

In a public place in Milan, ANTONIO *and* DELIO *discuss the former's position. They have not yet heard of the murder of the* DUCHESS.

ANT. What think you of my hope of reconcilement
To the Arragonian brethren?
DELIO. I misdoubt it;
For, though they have sent their letters of safe-conduct
For your repair to Milan, they appear
But nets to entrap you. The Marquis of Pescara,
Under whom you hold certain land in cheat,[1]

[1] in fee.

Much 'gainst his noble nature hath been moved
To seize those lands; and some of his dependants
Are at this instant making it their suit
To be invested in your revenues. [21
I cannot think they mean well to your life
That do deprive you of your means of life,
Your living.
ANT. You are still an heretic
To any safety I can shape myself.
DELIO. Here comes the marquis: I will make myself [30
Petitioner for some part of your land,
To know whither it is flying.
ANT. I pray, do. [*Steps back out of sight, but within hearing.*

Enter PESCARA.

DELIO. Sir, I have a suit to you.
PES. To me?
DELIO. An easy one:
There is the Citadel of Saint Bennet,
With some demesnes, of late in the possession [41
Of Antonio Bologna: please you bestow them on me.
PES. You are my friend; but this is such a suit,
Nor fit for me to give nor you to take.
DELIO. No, sir?
PES. I will give you ample reason for't
Soon in private. Here's the cardinal's mistress. [51

Enter JULIA.

JULIA. My lord, I am grown your poor petitioner,
And should be an ill beggar, had I not
A great man's letter here, the cardinal's,
To court you in my favor. [*Hands* PESCARA *a letter, which he reads.*
PES. He entreats for you
The Citadel of Saint Bennet, that be- [60
longed
To the banished Bologna.
JULIA. Yes.
PES. I could not have thought of a friend I could rather
Pleasure with it: 'tis yours.
JULIA. Sir, I thank you;
And he shall know how doubly I am engaged [69
Both in your gift and speediness of giving,
Which makes your grant the greater.
[*Exit.*
ANT. <How they fortify
Themselves with my ruin!>
DELIO. Sir, I am
Little bound to you.
PES. Why?
DELIO. Because you denied this suit to me, and gave't
To such a creature. [80
PES. Do you know what it was?
It was Antonio's land; not forfeited
By course of law, but ravished from his throat
By the cardinal's entreaty. It were not fit
I should bestow so main a piece of wrong
Upon my friend; 'tis a gratification
Only due to a strumpet, for it is injustice.
Shall I sprinkle the pure blood of innocents [91
To make those followers I call my friends
Look ruddier upon me? I am glad
This land, ta'en from the owner by such wrong,
Returns again unto so foul an use
As salary for his lust. Learn, good Delio,
To ask noble things of me, and you shall find
I'll be a noble giver. [100
DELIO. You instruct me well.
ANT. <Why, here's a man now would fright impudence
From sauciest beggars.>
PES. Prince Ferdinand's come to Milan,
Sick, as they give out, of an apoplexy;
But some say 'tis a frenzy: I am going
To visit him. [*Exit.*
ANT., *coming forward.* 'Tis a noble old fellow. [111
DELIO. What course do you mean to take, Antonio?

ANT. This night I mean to venture all my fortune,
Which is no more than a poor lingering life,
To the cardinal's worst of malice. I have got
Private access to his chamber, and intend [121
To visit him about the mid of night,
As once his brother did our noble duchess.
It may be that the sudden apprehension
Of danger—for I'll go in mine own shape—
When he shall see it fraught[2] with love and duty,
May draw the poison out of him, and work [130
A friendly reconcilement. If it fail,
Yet it shall rid me of this infamous calling;
For better fall once than be ever falling.
DELIO. I'll second you in all danger; and, howe'er,[3]
My life keeps rank with yours.
ANT. You are still my loved and best friend.

SCENE II

FERDINAND, *now quite insane, is in the* DOCTOR'S *hands in a palace in Milan occupied by himself and the* CARDINAL. PESCARA *and the* DOCTOR *are talking about him in a hall which opens into a room given up to* JULIA, *the* CARDINAL'S *mistress.*

PES. Now, doctor, may I visit your patient?
DOC. If't pleases your lordship; but he's instantly [11
To take the air here in the gallery
By my direction.
PES. Pray thee, what's his disease?
DOC. A very pestilent disease, my lord,
They call lycanthropia.
PES. What's that?
I need a dictionary to't.
DOC. I'll tell you:
In those that are possessed with't [20
there o'erflows
Such melancholy humor they imagine
Themselves to be transformëd into wolves,
Steal forth to church-yards in the dead of night,
And dig dead bodies up; as two nights since
Oné met the duke 'bout midnight in a lane
Behind Saint Mark's church, with the leg of a man [31
Upon his shoulder; and he howled fearfully;
Said he was a wolf, only the difference
Was, a wolf's skin was hairy on the outside,
His on the inside; bade them take their swords,
Rip up his flesh, and try. Straight I was sent for, [40
And, having ministered to him, found his grace
Very well recovered.
PES. I am glad on't.
DOC. Yet not without some fear
Of a relapse. If he grow to his fit again,
I'll go a nearer way to work with him
Than ever Paracelsus dreamed of: if
They'll give me leave, I'll buffet his madness out of him. [50
Stand aside; he comes.

Enter FERDINAND, CARDINAL, MALATESTE, *and* BOSOLA.

FERD. Leave me.
MAL. Why doth your lordship love this solitariness?
FERD. Eagles commonly fly alone; they are crows, daws, and starlings that flock together. Look, what's that follows me? [60
MAL. Nothing, my lord.
FERD. Yes.
MAL. 'Tis your shadow.
FERD. Stay it; let it not haunt me.
MAL. Impossible, if you move, and the sun shine.
FERD. I will throttle it. [*Throws himself down on his shadow.*
MAL. O, my lord, you are angry with nothing. [69
FERD. You are a fool: how is't possible I should catch my shadow, unless I fall upon't? When I go to hell, I mean

[2] fraught.
[3] in any case.

to carry a bribe; for, look you, good gifts evermore make way for the worst persons.

PES. Rise, good my lord.

FERD. I am studying the art of patience.

PES. 'Tis a noble virtue. [79

FERD. To drive six snails before me from this town to Moscow; neither use goad nor whip to them, but let them take their own time (the patient'st man i' th' world match me for an experiment); and I'll crawl after like a sheep-biter.[4]

CARD. Force him up. [*They raise him.*

FERD. Use me well, you were best. What I have done, I have done: I'll confess nothing.

DOC. Now let me come to him.—Are you mad, my lord? [91

Are you out of your princely wits?

FERD. What's he?

PES. Your doctor.

FERD. Let me have his beard sawed off, and his eye-brows filed more civil.

DOC. I must do mad tricks with him, for that's the only way on't.—I have brought your grace a salamander's skin to keep you from sunburning. [100

FERD. I have cruel sore eyes.

DOC. The white of a cockatrix's egg is present remedy.

FERD. Let it be a new-laid one, you were best.—Hide me from him. Physicians are like kings: they brook no contradiction.

DOC. Now he begins to fear me: now let me alone with him. [*Takes off his gown.* [110

CARD. How now! put off your gown!

DOC. Let me have some forty urinals filled with rose-water: he and I'll go pelt one another with them.—Now he begins to fear me.—Can you fetch a frisk, sir? —Let him go, let him go, upon my peril: I find by his eye he stands in awe of me; I'll make him as tame as a dormouse.

FERD. Can you fetch your frisks, sir!—I will stamp him into a cullis,[5] flay off [120 his skin to cover one of the anatomies[6] this rogue hath set i' th' cold yonder in Barber-Chirurgeon's-hall.—Hence, hence! you are all of you like beasts for sacrifice. [*Throws the* DOCTOR *down and beats him.*] There's nothing left of you but tongue and belly, flattery and lechery.

[*Exit.*

PES. Doctor, he did not fear you thoroughly. [130

DOC. True; I was somewhat too forward.

BOS. <Mercy upon me, what a fatal judgment
Hath fall'n upon this Ferdinand!>

PES. Knows your grace
What accident hath brought unto the prince
This strange distraction?

CARD. <I must feign somewhat.>
Thus they say it grew. [141
You have heard it rumored, for these many years
None of our family dies but there is seen
The shape of an old woman, which is given
By tradition to us to have been murdered
By her nephews for her riches. Such a figure [151
One night, as the prince sat up late at's book,
Appeared to him; when, crying out for help,
The gentleman of's chamber found his grace
All on a cold sweat, altered much in face
And language: since which apparition, [160
He hath grown worse and worse, and I much fear
He cannot live.

BOS. Sir, I would speak with you.

PES. We'll leave your grace,
Wishing to the sick prince, our noble lord,
All health of mind and body.

CARD. You are most welcome.—
[*Exeunt* PESCARA, MALATESTE, *and* DOCTOR. [171

Are you come? so. <This fellow must not know

[4] A dog which worries sheep.
[5] broth. [6] skeletons.

By any means I had intelligence
In our duchess' death; for, though I counselled it,
The full of all th' engagement seemed to grow
From Ferdinand.> Now, sir, how fares our sister? [180
I do not think but sorrow makes her look
Like to an oft-dyed garment. She shall now
Take comfort from me. Why do you look so wildly?
O, the fortune of your master here, the prince,
Dejects you; but be you of happy comfort: [190
If you'll do one thing for me I'll entreat,
Though he had a cold tomb-stone o'er his bones,
[I'll] make you what you would be.
Bos. Any thing;
Give it me in a breath, and let me fly to't.
They that think long small expedition win,
For, musing much o' th' end, cannot begin. [201

Enter Julia *from her room.*

Julia. Sir, will you come in to supper?
Card. I am busy; leave me.
Julia. <What an excellent shape hath that fellow!> [*Exit into her room.*
Card. 'Tis thus: Antonio lurks here in Milan:
Inquire him out, and kill him. While he lives, [210
Our sister cannot marry; and I have thought
Of an excellent match for her. Do this, and style me
Thy advancement.
Bos. But by what means shall I find him out?
Card. There is a gentleman called Delio
Here in the camp, that hath been long approved [221
His loyal friend. Set eye upon that fellow;
Follow him to mass; may be Antonio,
Although he do account religion
But a school-name, for fashion of the world
May accompany him; or else go inquire out [229
Delio's confessor, and see if you can bribe
Him to reveal it. There are a thousand ways
A man might find to trace him; as to know
What fellows haunt the Jews, for taking up
Great sums of money, for sure he's in want;
Or else to go to th' picture-makers, and learn [240
Who brought [7] her picture lately: some of these
Happily [8] may take.
Bos. Well, I'll not freeze i' th' business:
I would see that wretched thing, Antonio,
Above all sights i' th' world.
Card. Do, and be happy. [*Exit.*
Bos. This fellow doth breed basilisks in's eyes; [250
He's nothing else but murder; yet he seems
Not to have notice of the duchess' death.
'Tis his cunning: I must follow his example;
There cannot be a surer way to trace
Than that of an old fox.

Re-enter Julia, *with a pistol.*

Julia. So, sir, you are well met.
Bos. How now! [260
Julia. Nay, the doors are fast enough.
Now, sir, I will make you confess your treachery.
Bos. Treachery!
Julia. Yes, confess to me
Which of my women 'twas you hired to put
Love-powder into my drink?
Bos. Love powder! [269
Julia. Yes, when I was at Malfi.
Why should I fall in love with such a face else?

[7] Dyce conjectured "bought."
[8] mayhap.

I have already suffered for thee so much pain,
The only remedy to do me good
Is to kill my longing.
Bos. Sure, your pistol holds
Nothing but perfumes or kissing-comfits.[9]
Excellent lady! [279
You have a pretty way on't to discover
Your longing. Come, come, I'll disarm you, [*Takes her pistol away.*
And arm you thus: yet this is wondrous strange.
Julia. Compare thy form and my eyes together,
You'll find my love no such great miracle.
Now you'll say I am wanton: this nice modesty
In ladies is but a troublesome familiar
That haunts them. [291
Bos. Know you me, I am a blunt soldier.
Julia. The better:
Sure there wants fire where there are no lively sparks
Of roughness.
Bos. And I want compliment.
Julia. Why, ignorance
In courtship cannot make you do amiss,
If you have a heart to do well. [301
Bos. You are very fair.
Julia. Nay, if you lay beauty to my charge,
I must plead unguilty.
Bos. Your bright eyes
Carry a quiver of darts in them, sharper
Than sun-beams.
Julia. You will mar me with commendation, [310
Put yourself to the charge of courting me,
Whereas now I woo you.
Bos. <I have it: I will work upon this creature.>
Let us grow most amorously familiar.
[*Embracing her.*] If the great cardinal now should see me thus,
Would he not count me a villain?
Julia. No; he might count me a wanton, [321
Not lay a scruple of offence on you;

[9] perfumed sweetmeats for the breath.

For, if I see and steal a diamond,
The fault is not i' th' stone, but in me, the thief
That purloins it. I am sudden with you. We
That are great women of pleasure use to cut off
These uncertain wishes and unquiet longings, [331
And in an instant join the sweet delight
And the pretty excuse together. Had you been i' th' street,
Under my chamber-window, even there
I should have courted you.
Bos. O, you are an excellent lady!
Julia. Bid me do somewhat for you presently
To express I love you. [340
Bos. I will; and, if you love me,
Fail not to effect it.
The cardinal is grown wondrous melancholy;
Demand the cause, let him not put you off
With feigned excuse; discover the main ground on't.
Julia. Why would you know this? [349
Bos., *his invention equal to the emergency.* I have depended on him,
And I hear that he is fall'n in some disgrace
With the emperor: if he be, like the mice
That forsake falling houses, I would shift
To other dependance.
Julia. You shall not need
Follow the wars: I'll be your maintenance.
Bos. And I your loyal servant; but I cannot [360
Leave my calling.
Julia. Not leave an ungrateful
General for the love of a sweet lady!
You are like some cannot sleep in feather-beds,
But must have blocks for their pillows.
Bos. Will you do this?
Julia. Cunningly.
Bos. To-morrow I'll expect th' intelligence. [370
Julia. To-morrow! Get you into my cabinet;

You shall have it with you. Do not delay me,
No more than I do you: I am like one
That is condemned; I have my pardon promised,
But I would see it sealed. Go, get you in:
You shall see me wind my tongue about his heart
Like a skein of silk. [Bosola *goes into her room.*

Re-enter Cardinal.

Card., *calling.* Where are you?

Enter Servants.

Servants. Here.
Card. Let none, upon your lives, have conference
With the Prince Ferdinand, unless I know it.
<In this distractiön he may reveal
The murder. [*The Servants bow and depart.*
Yond's my lingering consumption:
I am weary of her, and by any means
Would be quit of.>
Julia. How now, my lord! what ails you?
Card. Nothing.
Julia. O, you are much altered.
Come, I must be your secretary, and remove
This lead from off your bosom: what's the matter?
Card. I may not tell you.
Julia. Are you so far in love with sorrow
You cannot part with part of it? Or think you
I cannot love your grace when you are sad
As well as merry? Or do you suspect
I, that have been a secret to your heart
These many winters, cannot be the same
Unto your tongue?
Card. Satisfy thy longing—
The only way to make thee keep my counsel
Is, not to tell thee.
Julia. Tell your echo this,
Or flatterers, that, like echoes, still report
What they hear, though most imperfect, and not me;
For, if that you be true unto yourself,
I'll know.
Card. Will you rack me?
Julia. No, judgment shall
Draw it from you: it is an equal fault,
To tell one's secrets unto all or none.
Card. The first argues folly.
Julia. But the last, tyranny.
Card. Very well: why, imagine I have committed
Some secret deed which I desire the world
May never hear of.
Julia. Therefore may not I know it?
You have concealed for me as great a sin
As adultery. Sir, never was occasion
For perfect trial of my constancy
Till now; sir, I beseech you—
Card. You'll repent it.
Julia. Never.
Card. It hurries thee to ruin: I'll not tell thee.
Be well advised, and think what danger 'tis
To receive a prince's secrets. They that do
Had need have their breasts hooped with adamant
To contain them. I pray thee, yet be satisfied.
Examine thine own frailty; 'tis more easy
To tie knots than unloose them. 'Tis a secret
That, like a lingering poison, may chance lie
Spread in thy veins, and kill thee seven year hence.
Julia. Now you dally with me.
Card. No more; thou shalt know it.
By my appointment, the great Duchess of Malfi
And two of her young children, four nights since,
Were strangled.
Julia. O heaven! sir, what have you done!

CARD. How now? How settles this? Think you your bosom
Will be a grave dark and obscure enough
For such a secret?
JULIA. You have undone yourself, sir.
CARD. Why?
JULIA. It lies not in me to conceal it.
CARD. No?
Come, I will swear you to't upon this book. [481
JULIA. Most religiously.
CARD. Kiss it. [*She kisses the book.*
Now you shall never utter it; thy curiosity
Hath undone thee; thou'rt poisoned with that book.
Because I knew thou couldst not keep my counsel,
I have bound thee to't by death. [490

Re-enter BOSOLA.

BOS. For pity sake, hold!
CARD. Ha, Bosola!
JULIA. I forgive you
This equal piece of justice you have done;
For I betrayed your counsel to that fellow.
He overheard it; that was the cause I said [499
It lay not in me to conceal it.
BOS. O foolish woman,
Couldst not thou have poisoned him?
JULIA. 'Tis weakness
Too much to think what should have been done. I go,
I know not whither. [*Dies.*
CARD. Wherefore com'st thou hither?
BOS. That I might find a great man like yourself,
Not out of his wits, as the Lord Ferdinand, [511
To remember my service.
CARD. I'll have thee hewed in pieces.
BOS. Make not yourself such a promise of that life
Which is not yours to dispose of.
CARD. Who placed thee here?
BOS. Her lust, as she intended.
CARD. Very well:
Now you know me for your fellow-murderer. [521
BOS. And wherefore should you lay fair marble colors
Upon your rotten purposes to me?
Unless you imitate some that do plot great treasons,
And, when they have done, go hide themselves i' th' graves
Of those were actors in't?
CARD. No more; there is
A fortune attends thee. [531
BOS. Shall I go sue to Fortune any longer?
'Tis the fool's pilgrimage.
CARD. I have honors in store for thee.
BOS. There are a many ways that conduct to seeming
Honor, and some of them very dirty ones. [539
CARD. Throw to the devil thy melancholy. The fire burns well;
What need we keep a-stirring of't, and make
A greater smother?[10] Thou wilt kill Antonio?
BOS. Yes.
CARD. Take up that body.
BOS. I think I shall
Shortly grow the common bier for church-yards. [550
CARD. I will allow thee some dozen of attendants
To aid thee in the murder.
BOS. O, by no means. Physicians that apply horse-leeches to any rank swelling use to cut off their tails, that the blood may run through them the faster: let me have no train when I go to shed blood, less it makes me have a greater when I ride to the gallows. [560
CARD. Come to me after midnight, to help to remove
That body to her own lodging. I'll give out
She died o' th' plague; 'twill breed the less inquiry
After her death.
BOS. Where's Castruccio, her husband?
CARD. He's rode to Naples, to take possession [570
Of Antonio's citadel.

[10] smoke.

Bos. Believe me, you have done a very happy turn.
Card. Fail not to come. There is the master-key
Of our lodgings; and by that you may conceive
What trust I plant in you.
Bos. You shall find me ready.
[*Exit* Cardinal. [580
O poor Antonio, though nothing be so needful
To thy estate as pity, yet I find
Nothing so dangerous! I must look to my footing:
In such slippery ice-pavements men had need
To be frost-nailed well, they may break their necks else;
The precedent's here afore me. How this man [591
Bears up in blood! seems fearless! Why, 'tis well:
Security some men call the suburbs of hell,
Only a dead wall between. Well, good Antonio,
I'll seek thee out; and all my care shall be [599
To put thee into safety from the reach
Of these most cruel biters, that have got
Some of thy blood already. It may be
I'll join with thee in a most just revenge.
The weakest arm is strong enough that strikes
With the sword of justice. Still methinks the duchess
Haunts me: there, there!—'Tis nothing but my melancholy. [610
O Penitence, let me truly taste thy cup,
That throws men down only to raise them up!

Scene III

A fortification in Milan, overlooked by the Cardinal's *window.* Antonio *and* Delio *are together.*

Delio. Yond's the cardinal's window. This fortification
Grew from the ruins of an ancient abbey;
And to yond side o' th' river lies a wall,
Piece of a cloister, which in my opinion
Gives the best echo that you ever heard,
So hollow and so dismal, and withal [11
So plain in the distinction of our words,
That many have supposed it is a spirit
That answers.
Ant. I do love these ancient ruins:
We never tread upon them but we set
Our foot upon some reverend history;
And, questionless, here in this open court,
Which now lies naked to the injuries [19
Of stormy weather, some men lie interred
Loved the church so well, and gave so largely to't,
They thought it should have canopied their bones
Till doomsday; but all things have their end;
Churches and cities, which have diseases like to men,
Must have like death that we have. [29
Echo. "Like death that we have."
Delio. Now the echo hath caught you.
Ant. It groaned, methought, and gave
A very deadly accent.
Echo. "Deadly accent."
Delio. I told you 'twas a pretty one. You may make it.
A huntsman, or a falconer, a musician,
Or a thing of sorrow.
Echo. "A thing of sorrow."
Ant. Ay, sure, that suits it best. [40
Echo. "That suits it best."
Ant. 'Tis very like my wife's voice.
Echo. "Ay, wife's voice."
Delio. Come, let us walk farther from't.
I would not have you go to the cardinal's to-night:
Do not.
Echo. "Do not." [49
Delio. Wisdom doth not more moderate wasting sorrow
Than time. Take time for't; be mindful of thy safety.
Echo. "Be mindful of thy safety."
Ant. Necessity compels me.
Make scrutiny throughout the passages
Of your own life, you'll find it impossible

To fly your fate.
ECHO. "O, fly your fate!"
DELIO. Hark! the dead stones seem to have pity on you,
And give you good counsel.
ANT. Echo, I will not talk with thee,
For thou art a dead thing.
ECHO. "Thou art a dead thing."
ANT. My duchess is asleep now,
And her little ones, I hope, sweetly. O heaven,
Shall I never see her more?
ECHO. "Never see her more."
ANT. I marked not one repetition of the echo
But that; and on the sudden a clear light
Presented me a face folded in sorrow.
DELIO. Your fancy merely.
ANT. Come, I'll be out of this ague;
For to live thus is not indeed to live:
It is a mockery and abuse of life.
I will not henceforth save myself by halves;
Lose all or nothing.
DELIO. Your own virtue save you!
I'll fetch your eldest son, and second you.
It may be that the sight of his own blood
Spread in so sweet a figure may beget
The more compassion. However, fare you well.
Though in our miseries Fortune have a part,
Yet in our noble sufferings she hath none.
Contempt of pain: that we may call our own. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV

The CARDINAL, PESCARA, MALATESTE, RODERIGO, *and* GRISOLAN, *are in the hall which was the scene of* V 2. *It is the night of the same day.*

CARD. You shall not watch to-night by the sick prince;
His grace is very well recovered.
MAL. Good my lord, suffer us.
CARD. O, by no means;
The noise, and change of object in his eye
Doth more distract him. I pray, all to bed;
And, though you hear him in his violent fit,
Do not rise, I entreat you.
PES. So, sir; we shall not.
CARD. Nay, I must have you promise
Upon your honors, for I was enjoined to't
By himself; and he seemed to urge it sensibly.
PES. Let our honors bind this trifle.
CARD. Nor any of your followers.
MAL. Neither.
CARD. It may be, to make trial of your promise,
When he's asleep, myself will rise and feign
Some of his mad tricks, and cry out for help,
And feign myself in danger.
MAL. If your throat were cutting,
I'd not come at you, now I have protested against it.
CARD. Why, I thank you.
GRIS. 'Twas a foul storm to-night.
ROD. The Lord Ferdinand's chamber shook like an osier.
MAL. <'Twas nothing but pure kindness in the devil
To rock his own child.> [*Exeunt all except the* CARDINAL.
CARD. The reason why I would not suffer these
About my brother is because at midnight
I may with better privacy convey
Julia's body to her own lodging. O, my conscience!
I would pray now; but the devil takes away my heart
For having any confidence in prayer.
About this hour I appointed Bosola
To fetch the body. When he hath served my turn,
He dies. [*Exit. The stage is left in darkness.*

Enter BOSOLA.

BOS. Ha! 'twas the cardinal's voice;
I heard him name Bosola and my death.
Listen; I hear one's footing.

Enter FERDINAND.

FERD. Strangling is a very quiet death.

Bos. <Nay, then, I see I must stand upon my guard.>

Ferd. What say to that? Whisper softly: do you agree to't? So; it must be done i' th' dark; the cardinal would not for a thousand pounds the doctor should see it. [*Exit.*

Bos. My death is plotted; here's the consequence of murder.

We value not desert nor Christian breath,
When we know black deeds must be cured with death.

Enter Antonio *and* Servant.

Serv. Here stay, sir, and be confident, I pray;
I'll fetch you a dark lantern. [*Exit.*

Ant. Could I take him
At his prayers, there were hope of pardon.

Bos. Fall right, my sword!— [*Stabs him.*

I'll not give thee so much leisure as to pray.

Ant. O, I am gone! Thou hast ended a long suit
In a minute.

Bos., *recognizing that he has blundered.* What art thou?

Ant. A most wretched thing,
That only have thy benefit in death,
To appear myself.

Re-enter Servant *with a light.*

Serv. Where are you, sir?

Ant. Very near my home.—Bosola!

Serv. O, misfortune!

Bos. Smother thy pity, thou art dead else.—Antonio!
The man I would have saved 'bove mine own life!
We are merely the stars' tennis-balls, struck and bandied
Which way please them.—O good Antonio,
I'll whisper one thing in thy dying ear
Shall make thy heart break quickly! Thy fair duchess
And two sweet children—

Ant. Their very names
Kindle a little life in me.

Bos. Are murdered.

Ant. Some men have wished to die
At the hearing of sad tidings; I am glad
That I shall do't in sadness.[11] I would not now
Wish my wounds balmed nor healed, for I have no use
To put my life to. In all our quest of greatness,
Like wanton boys whose pastime is their care,
We follow after bubbles blown in th' air.
Pleasure of life, what is't? Only the good hours
Of an ague; merely a preparative to rest,
To endure vexation. I do not ask
The process of my death; only commend me
To Delio.

Bos. Break, heart!

Ant. And let my son fly the courts of princes. [*Dies.*

Bos. Thou seem'st to have loved Antonio.

Serv. I brought him hither,
To have reconciled him to the cardinal.

Bos. I do not ask thee that.
Take him up, if thou tender thine own life,
And bear him where the lady Julia
Was wont to lodge.—O, my fate moves swift!
I have this cardinal in the forge already;
Now I'll bring him to th' hammer. O direful misprision![12]
I will not imitate things glorious,
No more than base; I'll be mine own example.—
On, on, and look thou represent, for silence,
The thing thou bear'st.

They are about to take up the body of Antonio, *when the* Cardinal *re-enters. He has a book in his hand.*

Card. I am puzzled in a question about hell;
He says, in hell there's one material fire,
And yet it shall not burn all men alike.
Lay him by. How tedious is a guilty conscience!

[11] reality. [12] error.

When I look into the fish-ponds in my garden,
Methinks I see a thing armed with a rake,
That seems to strike at me.—[*Seeing* Bosola.] Now, art thou come?
Thou look'st ghastly;
There sits in thy face some great determination
Mixed with some fear. [170

Bos. Thus it lightens into action:
I am come to kill thee.

Card. Ha!—[*Calling.*] Help! our guard!

Bos. Thou art deceived; they are out of thy howling.

Card. Hold, and I will faithfully divide
Revenues with thee.

Bos. Thy prayers and proffers
Are both unseasonable. [180

Card., *calling.* Raise the watch!
We are betrayed!

Bos. I have confined your flight:
I'll suffer your retreat to Julia's chamber,
But no further.

Card. Help! we are betrayed!

We are now looking into two rooms, one above and one below. Those in neither room can see those in the other.

Pescara, Malateste, Roderigo, [191 *and* Grisolan *enter into a room above.*

Mal. Listen.

Card., *calling.* My dukedom for rescue!

Rod. Fie upon his counterfeiting

Mal. Why, 'tis not the cardinal.

Rod. Yes, yes, 'tis he:
But, I'll see him hanged ere I'll go down to him. [199

Card., *calling.* Here's a plot upon me; I am assaulted! I am lost,
Unless some rescue!

Gris. He doth this pretty well;
But it will not serve to laugh me out of mine honor.

Card., *calling.* The sword's at my throat!

Rod. You would not bawl so loud then.

Mal. Come, come, let's go to bed: he told us this much aforehand. [210

Pes. He wished you should not come at him; but, believe't,
The accent of the voice sounds not in jest.
I'll down to him, howsoever, and with engines
Force ope the doors. [*Exit above.*

Rod. Let's follow him aloof,
And note how the cardinal will laugh at him. [*Exeunt above,* Malateste, Roderigo, *and* Grisolan. [221

Bos. There's for you first,
'Cause you shall not unbarricade the door
To let in rescue. [*Kills the* Servant.

Card. What cause hast thou to pursue my life?

Bos. Look there.

Card. Antonio!

Bos. Slain by my hand unwittingly.
Pray, and be sudden. When thou kill'dst thy sister, [231
Thou took'st from Justice her most equal balance,
And left her naught but her sword.

Card. O, mercy!

Bos. Now it seems thy greatness was only outward;
For thou fall'st faster of thyself than calamity [239
Can drive thee. I'll not waste longer time; there! [*Stabs him.*

Card. Thou hast hurt me.

Bos. Again! [*Stabs him again.*

Card. Shall I die like a leveret,
Without any resistance?—[*Calling.*] Help, help, help!
I am slain!

Enter Ferdinand.

Ferd. Th' alarum! Give me a fresh horse; [250
Rally the vaunt-guard, or the day is lost,
Yield, yield! I give you the honor of arms,
Shake my sword over you; will you yield?

Card. Help me; I am your brother!

Ferd. The devil!
My brother fight upon the adverse party! [*He wounds the* Cardinal, *and, in the scuffle, gives* Bosola *his death-wound.* [261

There flies your ransom.
CARD. O justice!
I suffer now for what hath former bin:
Sorrow is held the eldest child of sin.
FERD. Now you're brave fellows. Cæsar's fortune was harder than Pompey's; Cæsar died in the arms of prosperity, Pompey at the feet of disgrace. You both died in the field. The [270 pain's nothing; pain many times is taken away with the apprehension of greater, as the tooth-ache with the sight of a barber that comes to pull it out. There's philosophy for you.
BOS. Now my revenge is perfect.—Sink, thou main cause [*Stabs* FERDINAND.]
Of my undoing!—The last part of my life [280
Hath done me best service.
FERD. Give me some wet hay; I am broken-winded.
I do account this world but a dog-kennel:
I will vault credit and affect high pleasures
Beyond death.
BOS. He seems to come to himself,
Now he's so near the bottom.
FERD. My sister, O my sister! there's the cause on't. [291
Whether we fall by ambition, blood, or lust,
Like diamonds, we are cut with our own dust. [*Dies.*
CARD. Thou hast thy payment too.
BOS. Yes, I hold my weary soul in my teeth;
'Tis ready to part from me. I do glory
That thou, which stood'st like a huge pyramid [301
Begun upon a large and ample base,
Shalt end in a little point, a kind of nothing.

Enter, below, PESCARA, MALATESTE, RODERIGO, *and* GRISOLAN.

PES. How now, my lord!
MAL. O sad disaster!
ROD. How comes this?
BOS. Revenge for the Duchess of Malfi, murdered [311
By the Arragonian brethren; for Antonio
Slain by this hand; for lustful Julia
Poisoned by this man; and lastly for myself,
That was an actor in the main of all
Much 'gainst mine own good nature, yet i' th' end
Neglected.
PES. How now, my lord! [320
CARD. Look to my brother:
He gave us these large wounds, as we were struggling
Here i' th' rushes. And now, I pray, let me
Be laid by and never thought of. [*Dies.*
PES. How fatally, it seems, he did withstand
His own rescue! [329
MAL. Thou wretched thing of blood,
How came Antonio by his death?
BOS. In a mist,
I know not how; such a mistake as I
Have often seen in a play. O, I am gone!
We are only like dead walls or vaulted graves,
That, ruined, yields no echo. Fare you well!
It may be pain, but no harm, to me to die [340
In so good a quarrel. O, this gloomy world!
In what a shadow, or deep pit of darkness,
Doth womanish and fearful mankind live!
Let worthy minds ne'er stagger in distrust
To suffer death or shame for what is just:
Mine is another voyage. [*Dies.*
PES. The noble Delio, as I came to th' palace, [351
Told me of Antonio's being here, and showed me
A pretty gentleman, his son and heir.

Enter DELIO, *and* ANTONIO'S SON.

MAL. O sir, you came too late!
DELIO. I heard so, and
Was armed for't, ere I came. Let us make noble use [359
Of this great ruin; and join all our force

To establish this young hopeful gentleman
In's mother's right. These wretched eminent things
Leave no more fame behind 'em than should one
Fall in a frost, and leave his print in snow;
As soon as the sun shines, it ever melts,
Both form and matter. I have ever [370 thought
Nature doth nothing so great for great men
As when she's pleased to make them lords of truth:
Integrity of life is fame's best friend,
Which nobly, beyond death, shall crown the end.

CORIOLANUS

BY

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

INTRODUCTION

First appearing in the folio of 1623, "Coriolanus" is probably the last of Shakespeare's tragedies. There is none of its author's plays that affords less ground for definite dating. The play is based on North's Plutarch. Halliwell Phillipps suggested that the edition used was that of 1612, because a mistake in the early editions was first rectified in that one, and because that mistake is not followed in Shakespeare. Fleay, on the other hand, thought that the fourth edition merely followed the correction already made by the dramatist; but that is a view that does not appeal to one as probable. As, however, the correction is merely one of the word "unfortunate" for "unfortunately," and as Shakespeare, if using one of the earlier editions, may be credited with sufficient intelligence to perceive that the word used was not the correct one, it is to be doubted if any deduction is to be drawn from the circumstance. Apart from anything else, metrical considerations were sufficient to determine the poet's use of the word "unfortunate."

It has also been suggested that the political squabbles with which the play has to do indicate a date of from 1610 to 1614, when James was engaged in a struggle with Parliament. The resemblances between the Roman conditions sketched and those obtaining in England are not very marked; but the latter may have been sufficient to turn the poet's attention to the story of Coriolanus. The idea would nevertheless have attracted more attention than it has, had it not been for (1) the unwarranted belief that Shakespeare ended his dramatic career in or about 1610 or 1611, and the consequent reluctance to listen to any evidence or any argument in favor of a later date, and (2) the assumption that plays are to be fitted into a steady metrical progression that gives a regular chronological order. That assumption is scarcely justified; such percentages may indicate the period to which a play belongs; more than that is not to be expected from them. Too much depends upon the nature of the play considered. A play like "The Tempest" is likely to have a heavier percentage of feminine endings than a play of the character of "Coriolanus," but a smaller percentage of run-on lines. All we can say of "Coriolanus" on this score is that it plainly belongs to Shakespeare's latest period. It would seem, on the metrical analysis of the plays given in Neilson and Thorndike's "Facts About Shakespeare," to be the fourth latest (excluding plays generally re-

garded as collaborative), if equal value be attached to percentages of feminine endings, run-on lines, weak and light endings, and middle-ending speeches; and that is the position most scholars accord it; but on the same method of reckoning, "All's Well" comes sixth, "Macbeth" and "Lear" both being earlier, which no scholar would be willing to admit. If, then, these figures are to be ignored in the case of "All's Well," why should they be rigidly adhered to in the case of "Coriolanus"? Besides, even if we grant that an author has made steady progress in the employment of run-on lines and feminine endings and the rest up to a certain point, it is not impossible for him to reach a turning-point after which his percentages may begin to fall towards what they were previously. If we had a play of Shakespeare's of 1615, it is conceivable that it might conform to his manner of 1605 rather than to his manner of 1610.

In this connection, it has to be noted that "Coriolanus" differs in many respects from any other of his tragedies, and that his metrical characteristics might be modified by those differences. More than that, it may be argued that the conception of drama shown in it differs from that found in his other plays, and that it is, of all his works, the one of greatest maturity. It has no poetic flights, no particularly quotable passages. It displays little or nothing of the romantic spirit that dominates his other plays, none of the ready fancy, the imaginative sweep, the deep passion, the broad sympathy, the infinite variety that make his other dramas so attractive. Great as "Coriolanus" is, it is great in a different way, and the way seems to be that of an older man than the author of even so wonderful a tragedy as "Antony and Cleopatra." Here and here alone, Shakespeare is the political philosopher; and this phase of his character has come to the front at the expense of the poet in him. This being so, the interesting question arises, Would Shakespeare, having once developed this new theory of dramatic art, revert later to his earlier theory? That is unlikely; and therefore there seems some reason to believe that this is the latest of all Shakespeare's plays. Why should it not be as late as 1614? We know that Shakespeare was living in London in October and December of that year; and it is hard to believe that he would be in the city without exercising his pen. The common belief seems to be that it was written about 1608; but the only foundation for the belief is that afforded by the metrical analysis,[1] and the bearing of that evidence is by no means clear. Here we shall assume it to be of about 1613–4.

"Coriolanus" is not a play that makes a general appeal. It is not

[1] Since this was written, a reviewer of "The Times Literary Supplement" has pointed out an apparent reminiscence in Armin's "Italian Tailor," published 1609. The argument is the best yet adduced for the early date, and, though scarcely conclusive, must be accorded considerable weight. If it be accepted, it will move "Coriolanus" up from the thirty-sixth place in this collection to the twenty-eighth.

great in all-round characterization; but the hero is drawn with the most thorough care, insight, and sympathy. There can be little doubt that Shakespeare sympathized with Coriolanus against the tribunes; but his hero is presented with fairness and psychological truth. He is a truth-loving idealist, obstinate, unbending, haughty, offensively plain-spoken, and with an instinctive hatred of the time-server and the opportunist. He has no sense of humor, such as is possessed by his friend Menenius, no realization of the need for concession, such as constitutes the saving grace of his mother. He is an outrageous braggart, full of an overweening vanity, and even his dislike of hearing himself praised is only a manifestation of his self-love. His "Spoke he of me?" (III 1) is much more self-revealing than all his show of unwillingness to hear his great deeds talked of. However the author may have felt towards him, it is not easy for the reader to feel any sympathy for him. Everything revolves around him. He is the play.

Magnificent as the tragedy is, there is perhaps no play of its author's more in need of cutting, even though every line is meant to serve a dramatic purpose, and no space is given to mere poetry or rhetoric. In II 1 the chatter of Menenius with the tribunes becomes wearisome, and his offensive rudeness is almost exasperating. The Shakespearean authorship of the patch of a dozen rhyming lines in II 3 has been questioned, and the couplet preceding the hero's entry in II 1 should be regarded as in the same case. It is hard to know what to think of them. They may be assumed to be Shakespeare's, yet one can accept them only with much hesitation. One may also draw attention to a couple of very anapaestic lines in II 1, lines quite Fletcherian in their movement:

> Than carry it but by the suit o' the gentry to him
> And the desire of the nobles.
> I wish no better.

CHARACTERS

Caius Marcius.
Titus Lartius } *Generals against the*
Cominius } *Volscians.*
Menenius Agrippa, *Friend to Marcius.*
Sicinius Velutus } *Tribunes of the*
Junius Brutus } *People.*
Young Marcius, *Son to Marcius.*
A Roman Herald.
Tullus Aufidius, *General of the Volscians.*
Lieutenant *to Aufidius.*
Conspirators *with Aufidius.*
Nicanor, *a Roman.*
A Citizen of Antium.
Adrian, *a Volsce.*
Two Volscian Guards.
Volumnia, *Mother to Marcius.*
Virgilia, *Wife to Marcius.*
Valeria, *Friend to Virgilia.*
A Gentlewoman, *attending on Virgilia.*
Roman and Volscian Senators, Patricians, Ædiles, Lictors, Soldiers, Citizens, Messengers, Servants to Aufidius, and other Attendants.

Place: *Rome, Corioli, Antium, and the vicinity*
Time: *About* 490 B. C.

ACT ONE

Scene I

Into a street in Rome come a number of mutinous Citizens, *armed with staves, clubs, and other weapons. They are rising against patrician rule, the principal object of their hatred being the haughty* Caius Marcius, *notorious for his contempt of the commonalty.*

1 Cit. Before we proceed any further, hear me speak.

All. Speak, speak. [10

1 Cit. You are all resolved rather to die than to famish?

All. Resolved, resolved.

1 Cit. First, you know Caius Marcius is chief enemy to the people.

All. We know't, we know't.

1 Cit. Let us kill him, and we'll have corn at our own price. Is't a verdict?

All. No more talking on't; let it be done. Away, away! [20

2 Cit. One word, good citizens.

1 Cit. We are accounted poor citizens, the patricians good. What authority surfeits on would relieve us. If they would yield us but the superfluity, while it were wholesome, we might guess they relieved us humanely; but they think we are too dear: the leanness that afflicts us, the object of our misery, is as an inventory to particularise their abundance; our [30 sufferance is a gain to them. Let us revenge this with our pikes, ere we become rakes: for the gods know I speak this in hunger for bread, not in thirst for revenge.

2 Cit. Would you proceed especially against Caius Marcius?

1 Cit. Against him first: he's a very dog to the commonalty. [39

2 Cit. Consider you what services he has done for his country?

1 Cit. Very well, and could be content to give him good report for't, but that he pays himself with being proud.

2 Cit. Nay, but speak not maliciously.

1 Cit. I say unto you, what he hath done famously, he did it to that end: though soft-conscienced men can be content to say it was for his country, he did it to please his mother, and to be [50 partly proud, which he is, even to the altitude of his virtue.

2 Cit. What he cannot help in his nature you account a vice in him. You must in no way say he is covetous.

1 Cit. If I must not, I need not be barren of accusations: he hath faults, with surplus, to tire in repetition. [*Shouts within.*] What shouts are these? The other side o' the city is risen: why stay we prating here? to the Capitol! [61

All. Come, come.

1 Cit. Soft! who comes here?

Enter Menenius Agrippa.

2 Cit. Worthy Menenius Agrippa; one that hath always loved the people.

1 Cit. He's one honest enough: would all the rest were so!

Men. What work's, my countrymen, in hand? Where go you [70
With bats and clubs? The matter? Speak, I pray you.

1 Cit.[1] Our business is not unknown to the senate; they have had inkling this fortnight what we intend to do, which now we'll show 'em in deeds. They say poor suitors have strong breaths: they shall know we have strong arms too.

Men. Why, masters, my good friends, mine honest neighbors, [80

[1] This and all the later "Citizen" speeches in the scene are given in the folio to the 2nd Citizen.

Will you undo yourselves?

1 Cit. We cannot, sir; we are undone already.

Men. I tell you, friends, most charitable care
Have the patricians of you. For your wants,
Your suffering in this dearth, you may as well [89
Strike at the heaven with your staves as lift them
Against the Roman state, whose course will on
The way it takes, cracking ten thousand curbs
Of more strong link asunder than can ever
Appear in your impediment. For the dearth, [99
The gods, not the patricians, make it, and
Your knees to them, not arms, must help. Alack!
You are transported by calamity
Thither where more attends you; and you slander
The helms o' th' state, who care for you like fathers,
When you curse them as enemies.

1 Cit. Care for us! True, indeed! They ne'er cared for us yet: suffer us [110 to famish, and their storehouses crammed with grain; make edicts for usury, to support usurers; repeal daily any wholesome act established against the rich, and provide more piercing statutes daily to chain up and restrain the poor. If the wars eat us not up, they will; and there's all the love they bear us.

Men. Either you must [119
Confess yourselves wondrous malicious,
Or be accused of folly. I shall tell you
A pretty tale: it may be you have heard it;
But, since it serves my purpose, I will venture
To stale't a little more.

1 Cit. Well, I'll hear it, sir; yet you must not think to fob off our disgrace with a tale; but, an't please you, deliver. [130

Men. There was a time when all the body's members
Rebelled against the belly; thus accused it:
That only, like a gulf, it did remain
I' th' midst o' th' body, idle and unactive,
Still cupboarding the viand, never bearing
Like labor with the rest, where th' other instruments [140
Did see and hear, devise, instruct, walk, feel,
And, mutually participate, did minister
Unto the appetite and affection [2] common
Of the whole body. The belly answered—

1 Cit. Well, sir, what answer made the belly?

Men. Sir, I shall tell you.—With a kind of smile, [149
Which ne'er came from the lungs, but even thus—
For, look you, I may make the belly smile
As well as speak—it tauntingly replied
To th' discontented members, the mutinous parts
That envied his receipt; even so most fitly
As you malign our senators for that
They are not such as you. [160

1 Cit. Your belly's answer? What!
The kingly crownëd head, the vigilant eye,
The counsellor heart, the arm our soldier,
Our steed the leg, the tongue our trumpeter,
With other muniments and petty helps
In this our fabric, if that they—

Men. What then?— [170
<Fore me, this fellow speaks!> what then? what then?

1 Cit. Should by the cormorant belly be restrained,
Who is the sink o' th' body,—

Men. Well, what then?

1 Cit. The former agents, if they did complain,
What could the belly answer?

Men. I will tell you; [180

[2] inclination.

If you'll bestow a small, of what you have little,
Patience a while, you'st hear the belly's answer.
1 Cit. Y'are long about it.
Men. Note me this, good friend:
Your most grave belly was deliberate—
Not rash, like his accusers and thus answered: [189
"True is it, my incorporate friends," quoth he,
"That I receive the general food at first,
Which you do live upon; and fit it is,
Because I am the store-house and the shop
Of the whole body: but, if you do remember,
I send it through the rivers of your blood, [199
Even to the court, the heart, to th' seat o' th' brain;
And, through the cranks and offices of man,
The strongest nerves and small inferior veins
From me receive that natural competency
Whereby they live. And, though that all at once,
You, my good friends,"—this says the belly, mark me— [210
1 Cit., *impatiently*. Ay, sir, well, well.
Men. "Though all at once cannot
See what I do deliver out to each,
Yet I can make my audit up, that all
From me do back receive the flour of all,
And leave me but the bran." What say you to't?
1 Cit. It was an answer: how apply you this? [220
Men. The senators of Rome are this good belly;
And you, the mutinous members; for, examine
Their counsels and their cares, disgest things rightly
Touching the weal o' th' common, you shall find
No public benefit which you receive
But it proceeds or comes from them to you, [231
And no way from yourselves. What do you think,
You, the great toe of this assembly?
1 Cit. I the great toe? Why the great toe?
Men. For that, being one o' th' lowest, basest, poorest,
Of this most wise rebellion, thou go'st foremost: [240
Thou rascal, that art worst in blood to run,
Lead'st first to win some vantage.—
But make you ready your stiff bats and clubs:
Rome and her rats are at the point of battle;
The one side must have bale.[3]

Enter Caius Marcius.

Hail, noble Marcius! [250
Mar. Thanks.—What's the matter, you dissentious rogues,
That, rubbing the poor itch of your opinion,
Make yourselves scabs?
1 Cit. We have ever your good word.
Mar. He that will give good words to thee will flatter
Beneath abhorring. What would you have, you curs, [260
That like nor peace nor war? the one affrights you,
The other makes you proud. He that trusts to you,
Where he should find you lions, finds you hares;
Where foxes, geese: you are no surer, no,
Than is the coal of fire upon the ice,
Or hailstone in the sun. Your virtue is,
To make him worthy whose offence subdues him, [271
And curse that justice did it. Who deserves greatness
Deserves your hate; and your affections are
A sick man's appetite, who desires most that
Which would increase his evil. He that depends
Upon your favors swims with fins of lead [281

[3] suffer injury.

And hews down oaks with rushes. Hang ye! Trust ye?
With every minute you do change a mind,
And call him noble that was now your hate,
Him vild that was your garland. What's the matter,
That in these several places of the city
You cry against the noble senate, who, [290
Under the gods, keep you in awe, which else
Would feed on one another?—[*To* Menenius.] What's their seeking?

Men. For corn at their own rates; whereof they say
The city is well stored.

Mar. Hang 'em! They say!
They'll sit by th' fire, and presume to know [300
What's done i' th' Capitol, who's like to rise,
Who thrives, and who declines; side[4] factions, and give out
Conjectural marriages, making parties strong,
And feebling such as stand not in their liking,
Below their cobblëd shoes.—They say there's grain enough! [310
Would the nobility lay aside their ruth,
And let me use my sword, I'd make a quarry
With thousands of these quartered slaves, as high
As I could pick[5] my lance.

Men. Nay, these are almost thoroughly persuaded;
For, though abundantly they lack discretion, [320
Yet are they passing cowardly. But, I beseech you,
What says the other troop?

Mar. They are dissolved: hang 'em!
They said they were an-hungry; sighed forth proverbs:
That hunger broke stone walls; that dogs must eat;
That meat was made for mouths; that the gods sent not [330
Corn for the rich men only. With these shreds
They vented their complainings; which being answered,
And a petition granted them, a strange one—
To break the heart of generosity,
And make bold power look pale—they threw their caps [339
As they would hang them on the horns o' th' moon,
Shouting their emulation.[6]

Men. What is granted them?

Mar. Five tribunes to defend their vulgar wisdoms,
Of their own choice: one's Junius Brutus,
Sicinius Velutus, and—I know not—'Sdeath!
The rabble should have first unroofed the city, [350
Ere so prevailed with me; it will in time
Win upon power, and throw forth greater themes
For insurrection's arguing.

Men. This is strange.

Mar. Go; get you home, you fragments!

Enter a Messenger, *hastily.*

Mess. Where's Caius Marcius? [359

Mar. Here: what's the matter?

Mess. The news is, sir, the Volsces are in arms.

Mar. I am glad on't; then we shall ha' means to vent
Our musty superfluity. See, our best elders.

Enter Cominius, Titus Lartius, *and other* Senators; Junius Brutus *and* Sicinius Velutus.

1 Sen. Marcius, 'tis true that you have lately told us; [371
The Volsces are in arms.

Mar. They have a leader,
Tullus Aufidius, that will put you to't.
I sin in envying his nobility,
And were I anything but what I am,
I would wish me only he.

Com. You have fought together,

[4] join. [5] throw. [6] envy.

MAR. Were half to half the world by th' ears, and he
Upon my party, I'd revolt, to make
Only my wars with him: he is a lion
That I am proud to hunt.
1 SEN. Then, worthy Marcius,
Attend upon Cominius to these wars.
COM. It is your former promise.
MAR. Sir, it is;
And I am constant. Titus Lartius, thou
Shalt see me once more strike at Tullus' face.
What! art thou stiff? stand'st out?
TIT. No, Caius Marcius;
I'll lean upon one crutch and fight with t'other,
Ere stay behind this business.
MEN. O! true-bred.
1 SEN. Your company to th' Capitol; where I know
Our greatest friends attend us.
TIT. Lead you on:
[*To* MARCIUS.] Follow Cominius; we must follow you;
Right worthy you priority.
COM. Noble Marcius!
1 SEN., *to the Citizens*. Hence! to your homes! be gone.
MAR. Nay, let them follow:
The Volsces have much corn; take these rats thither,
To gnaw their garners.—[*Sarcastically*.] Worshipful mutiners,
Your valor puts well forth; pray, follow.
[*Exeunt* SENATORS, COMINIUS, MARCIUS, TITUS, *and* MENENIUS. CITIZENS *steal away*.
SIC. Was ever man so proud as is this Marcius?
BRU. He has no equal.
SIC. When we were chosen tribunes for the people—
BRU. Marked you his lip and eyes?
SIC. Nay, but his taunts.
BRU. Being moved, he will not spare to gird the gods.
SIC. Bemock the modest moon.
BRU. The present wars devour him; he is grown
Too proud to be[7] so valiant.
SIC. Such a nature,
Tickled with good success, disdains the shadow
Which he treads on at noon. But I do wonder
His insolence can brook to be commanded
Under Cominius.
BRU. Fame, at the which he aims,
In whom already he is well graced, cannot
Better be held nor more attained than by
A place below the first; for what miscarries
Shall be the general's fault, though he perform
To th' utmost of a man; and giddy censure
Will then cry out of Marcius "O! if he
Had borne the business."
SIC. Besides, if things go well,
Opinion, that so sticks on Marcius, shall
Of his demerits[8] rob Cominius.
BRU. Come;
Half all Cominius' honors are to[9] Marcius,
Though Marcius earned them not; and all his faults
To Marcius shall be honors, though indeed
In aught he merit not.
SIC. Let's hence and hear
How the dispatch is made; and in what fashion,
More than his singularity, he goes
Upon this present action.
BRU. Let's along. [*Exeunt*.

[7] of being.

SCENE II

The Senate of Corioli is in session. AUFIDIUS *has been telling it that its plans are known in Rome, and that, while Corioli is preparing for an attack on Rome, Rome is making ready to attack Corioli.*

1 SEN. So, your opinion is, Aufidius,
That they of Rome are entered in our counsels,
And know how we proceed.
AUF. Is it not yours?

[8] glory. [9] will be reaped by.

Whatever have been thought on in this state,
That could be brought to bodily act, ere Rome
Had circumvention? 'Tis not four days gone
Since I heard thence; these are the words —I think [19
I have the letter here; yes, here it is—
"They have pressed a power; but it is not known
Whether for east or west: the dearth is great,
The people mutinous; and it is rumored,
Cominius, Marcius, your old enemy—
Who is of Rome worse hated than of you—
And Titus Lartius, a most valiant Roman,
These three lead on this preparatiön [30
Whither 'tis bent: most likely 'tis for you.
Consider of it."
1 Sen. Our army's in the field:
We never yet made doubt but Rome was ready
To answer us.
Auf. Nor did you think it folly
To keep your great pretences veiled till when [40
They needs must show themselves; which, in the hatching,
It seemed, appeared to Rome. By the discovery
We shall be shortened in our aim, which was
To take in many towns ere almost Rome
Should know we were afoot.
2 Sen. Noble Aufidius,
Take your commission; hie you to your bands; [51
Let us alone to guard Corioli:
If they set down before's, for the remove [10]
Bring up your army; but I think you'll find
They've not prepared for us.
Auf. O, doubt not that;
I speak from certainties. Nay, more;
Some parcels of their power are forth already, [61
And only hitherward. I leave your honors.
If we and Caius Marcius chance to meet,
'Tis sworn between us we shall ever strike
Till one can do no more.
All. The gods assist you!
Auf. And keep your honors safe!
1 Sen. Farewell! [70
2 Sen. Farewell!
All. Farewell. [*Exit* Aufidius.

[10] raising of the siege.

Scene III

In Marcius' *house in Rome, his wife and mother are sitting on a couple of low stools, sewing.* Volumnia *takes pride in her son's honors; but* Virgilia *would much rather have him remain at home, and her despondency on his departure irritates her more masculine mother-in-law.* [8

Vol. I pray you, daughter, sing; or express yourself in a more comfortable sort. If my son were my husband, I would freelier rejoice in that absence wherein he won honor than in the embracements of his bed, where he would show most love. When yet he was but tender-bodied and the only son of my womb, when youth with comeliness plucked all gaze his way, when for a day of kings' entreaties a mother should not sell him an hour from her beholding, I, considering how honor [20 would become such a person, that it was no better than—picture-like—to hang by the wall, if renown made it not stir, was pleased to let him seek danger where he was like to find fame. To a cruel war I sent him; from whence he returned, his brows bound with oak. I tell thee, daughter, I sprang not more in joy at first hearing he was a man-child than now in first seeing he had proved himself a man. [31

Vir. But had he died in the business, madam; how then?

Vol. Then, his good report should have been my son; I therein would have found issue. Hear me profess sincerely: had I a dozen sons, each in my love alike, and none less dear than thine and my good

Marcius, I had rather had eleven die nobly for their country than one voluptuously surfeit out of action. [41

Enter a GENTLEWOMAN.

GEN. Madam, the Lady Valeria is come to visit you.

VIR. Beseech you, give me leave to retire myself.

VOL. Indeed, you shall not.

Methinks I hear hither your husband's drum, [49
See him pluck Aufidius down by the hair,
As children from a bear, the Volsces shunning him:
Methinks I see him stamp thus [*with appropriate action*], and call thus:
"Come on, you cowards! you were got in fear,
Though you were born in Rome." His bloody brow
With his mailed hand then wiping, forth he goes, [60
Like to a harvestman that's tasked to mow
Or all or lose his hire.

VIR. His bloody brow! O, Jupiter! no blood!

VOL. Away, you fool! it more becomes a man
Than gilt his trophy: the breasts of Hecuba,
When she did suckle Hector, looked not lovelier [71
Than Hector's forehead when it spit forth blood
At Grecian sword, contending. Tell Valeria
We are fit to bid her welcome. [*Exit* GENTLEWOMAN.

VIR. Heavens bless my lord from fell Aufidius!

VOL. He'll beat Aufidius' head below [80 his knee,
And tread upon his neck.

Re-enter GENTLEWOMAN, *with* VALERIA *and an Usher.*

VAL. My ladies both, good day to you.

VOL. Sweet madam.

VIR. I am glad to see your ladyship.

VAL. How do you both? you are manifest housekeepers. What are you sewing here? A fine spot, in good faith. How does your little son? [91

VIR. I thank your ladyship; well, good madam.

VOL. He had rather see the swords and hear a drum, than look upon his schoolmaster.

VAL. O' my word, the father's son; I'll swear 'tis a very pretty boy. O' my troth, I looked upon him o' Wednesday half an hour together: he has such a [100 confirmed countenance. I saw him run after a gilded butterfly; and, when he caught it, he let it go again; and after it again; and over and over he comes, and up again; catched it again: or whether his fall enraged him or how 'twas, he did so set his teeth and tear it; O! I warrant, how he mammocked[11] it!

VOL. One on's father's moods.

VAL. Indeed, la, 'tis a noble child. [110

VIR. A crack, madam.

VAL. Come, lay aside your stitchery; I must have you play the idle huswife with me this afternoon.

VIR. No, good madam; I will not out of doors.

VAL. Not out of doors!

VOL. She shall, she shall.

VIR. Indeed, no, by your patience; I'll not over the threshold till my lord return from the wars. [121

VOL. Fie! you confine yourself most unreasonably. Come; you must go visit the good lady that lies in.

VIR. I will wish her speedy strength, and visit her with my prayers; but I cannot go thither.

VOL. Why, I pray you?

VIR. 'Tis not to save labor, nor that I want love. [130

VAL. You would be another Penelope; yet, they say, all the yarn she spun in Ulysses' absence did but fill Ithaca full of moths. Come; I would your cambric were sensible[12] as your finger, that you might leave pricking it for pity. Come, you shall go with us.

[11] tore in pieces.
[12] sensitive.

VIR. No, good madam, pardon me; indeed, I will not forth. [139

VAL. In truth, la, go with me; and I'll tell you excellent news—of your husband.

VIR. O, good madam, there can be none yet.

VAL. Verily, I do not jest with you; there came news from him last night.

VIR. Indeed, madam?

VAL. In earnest, it's true; I heard a senator speak it. Thus it is: the Volsces have an army forth; against whom Cominius the general is gone, with one [150 part of our Roman power: your lord and Titus Lartius are set down before their city Corioli; they nothing doubt prevailing and to make it brief wars. This is true, on mine honor; and so, I pray, go with us.

VIR. Give me excuse, good madam; I will obey you in every thing hereafter.

VOL. Let her alone, lady: as she is now she will but disease our better mirth. [160

VAL. In troth, I think she would.—Fare you well then.—Come, good sweet lady.—Prithee, Virgilia, turn thy solemness out o' door, and go along with us.

VIR. No; at a word, madam, indeed I must not. I wish you much mirth.

VAL. Well then, farewell. [*Exeunt* VALERIA *and* VOLUMNIA.

SCENE IV

AUFIDIUS *and his Volsces are in the field, seeking an encounter with the Roman forces; but meanwhile* MARCIUS *and* LARTIUS, *with a detachment of the troops of Rome, have arrived before Corioli. A* MESSENGER *is seen hastening towards them.*

MAR. Yonder comes news: a wager they have met.

LART. My horse to yours, no. [10

MAR. 'Tis done.

LART. Agreed.

Enter a MESSENGER.

MAR. Say, has our general met the enemy?

MESS. They lie in view, but have not spoke as yet.

LART. So the good horse is mine.

MAR. I'll buy him of you.

LART. No, I'll nor sell nor give him; [20 lend you him I will
For half a hundred years. Summon the town.

MAR. How far off lie these armies?

MESS. Within this mile and half.

MAR. Then shall we hear their 'larum, and they ours.
Now, Mars, I prithee, make us quick in work,
That we with smoking swords may march from hence, [31
To help our fielded[13] friends! Come, blow thy blast. [*The trumpets blow a fanfare.*

Enter, on the Walls, two SENATORS *and Others.*

Tullus Aufidius, is he within your walls?

1 SEN. No, nor a man that fears you less than he,
That's lesser than a little. [*Drums sound afar off.*] Hark, our drums [41
Are bringing forth our youth: we'll break our walls,
Rather than they shall pound us up: our gates,
Which yet seem shut, we have but pinned with rushes;
They'll open of themselves. [*Alarum afar off.*] Hark you, far off.
There is Aufidius: list, what work he [50 makes
Amongst your cloven army.

MAR. O! they are at it!

LART. Their noise be our instruction. [*Calling.*] Ladders, ho!

MARCIUS, *however, looking toward the gates of the city, sees that the Volsces are not awaiting attack, but are pouring forth for an offensive.*

MAR. They fear us not, but issue forth their city. [61
Now put your shields before your hearts, and fight
With hearts more proof than shields. Advance, brave Titus:

[13] embattled.

They do disdain us much beyond our thoughts,
Which makes me sweat with wrath.— Come on, my fellows:
He that retires, I'll take him for a Volsce,
And he shall feel mine edge. [71

Scene V

We see the Romans beaten in the conflict, fleeing pell-mell into their trenches. Marcius *follows them in.*

Mar. All the contagion of the south light on you,
You shames of Rome! you herd of— Boils and plagues
Plaster you o'er, that you may be abhorred
Farther than seen, and one infect another [11
Against the wind a mile! You souls of geese,
That bear the shapes of men, how have you run
From slaves that apes would beat! Pluto and hell!
All hurt behind; backs red, and faces pale
With flight and agued fear! Mend and charge home, [20
Or, by the fires of heaven, I'll leave the foe
And make my wars on you; look to't: come on;
If you'll stand fast, we'll beat them to their wives,
As they us to our trenches. Follow me.[14]
[*The* Romans, *thus exhorted, advance to the combat.*

Scene VI

The fight is renewed, and the Volsces are driven back. They retreat into the city, Marcius *following them to the gates.*

Mar. So, now the gates are ope: now prove good seconds:
'Tis for the followers Fortune widens them,
Not for the fliers: mark me, and do the like. [*He enters the gates.* [10
1 Sol. Foolhardiness! not I.
2 Sol. Nor I.
[*The gates are shut.*
3 Sol. See, they have shut him in.
All. To th' pot, I warrant him.

Re-enter Titus Lartius.

Lart. What is become of Marcius?
All. Slain, sir, doubtless.
1 Sol. Following the fliers at the very heels, [20
With them he enters; who, upon the sudden,
Clapped-to their gates; he is himself alone,
To answer all the city.
Lart. O noble fellow!
Who, sensibly, outdares his senseless sword,
And, when it bows, stands up. Thou art lost,[15] Marcius: [30
A carbuncle entire, as big as thou art,
Were not so rich a jewel. Thou wast a soldier
Even to Cato's wish, not fierce and terrible
Only in strokes; but, with thy grim looks and
The thunder-like percussion of thy sounds, [39
Thou mad'st thine enemies shake, as if the world
Were feverous and did tremble.

The city gates, (one knows not how) open again, and Marcius *is visible, wounded, but defending himself manfully against the assaults of the enemy.*

1 Sol. Look, sir! [47
Lart. O! 'tis Marcius!
Let's fetch him off, or make remain alike.
[*They fight; and all enter the city.*

Scene VII

Though the fighting still continues, some of the Romans have already begun pillaging. In a street of the city, these are already assessing their spoils.

1 Rom. This will I carry to Rome.
2 Rom. And I, this.
3 Rom. A murrain on't! I took this for silver.

[14] B, "followes," which is usually altered to "followed."

[15] B, left.

Enter MARCIUS *and* TITUS LARTIUS, *with a trumpeter.*

MAR. See here these movers that do prize their hours
At a cracked drachme! Cushions, leaden spoons,
Irons of a doit, doublets that hangmen would
Bury with those that wore them, these base slaves,
Ere yet the fight be done, pack up. Down with them!
And hark, what noise the general makes! To him!
There is the man of my soul's hate, Aufidius,
Piercing our Romans: then, valiant Titus, take
Convenient numbers to make good the city,
Whilst I, with those that have the spirit, will haste
To help Cominius.

LART. Worthy sir, thou bleed'st;
Thy exercise hath been too violent
For a second course of fight.

MAR. Sir, praise me not;
My work hath yet not warmed me: fare you well:
The blood I drop is rather physical[16]
Than dangerous to me: to Aufidius thus
I will appear, and fight.

LART. Now the fair goddess, Fortune,
Fall deep in love with thee; and her great charms
Misguide thy opposers' swords! Bold gentleman,
Prosperity be thy page!

MAR. Thy friend no less
Than those she places highest! So, farewell!

LART. Thou worthiest Marcius!—

[*Exit* MARCIUS.

Go sound thy trumpet in the marketplace;
Call thither all the officers o' th' town,
Where they shall know our mind. Away!

[*Exeunt.*

[16] for my benefit.

SCENE VIII

A mile or so from Corioli, COMINIUS *and his troops have been driven back.* COMINIUS *has now stayed the retreat, the Volsces having made no attempt to drive their victory home.*

COM. Breathe you, my friends: well fought! we are come off
Like Romans, neither foolish in our stands,
Nor cowardly in retire: believe me, sirs,
We shall be charged again. Whiles we have struck,
By interims and conveying gusts we have heard
The charges of our friends. Ye Roman gods!
Lead their successes as we wish our own,
That both our powers, with smiling fronts encount'ring,
May give you thankful sacrifice.

Enter a MESSENGER.

Thy news?

MESS. The citizens of Corioli have issued,
And given to Lartius and to Marcius battle:
I saw our party to their trenches driven;
And then I came away.

COM. Though thou speak'st truth,
Methinks thou speak'st not well. How long is't since?

MESS. Above an hour, my lord.

COM. 'Tis not a mile; briefly[17] we heard their drums:
How couldst thou in a mile confound an hour,
And bring thy news so late?

MESS. Spies of the Volsces
Held me in chase, that I was forced to wheel
Three or four miles about; else had I, sir,
Half an hour since brought my report.

COM. Who's yonder,
That does appear as he were flayed? O gods!
He has the stamp of Marcius; and I have

[17] but a little while ago.

Before-time seen him thus.
MAR., *within.* Come I too late? [50
COM. The shepherd knows not thunder from a tabor,
More than I know the sound of Marcius' tongue
From every meaner man.

Enter MARCIUS.

MAR. Come I too late?
COM. Ay, if you come not in the blood of others,
But mantled in your own. [60
MAR. O! let me clip ye
In arms as sound as when I wooed, in heart
As merry as when our nuptial day was done,
And tapers burned to bedward.
COM. Flower of warriors!
How is't with Titus Lartius?
MAR. As with a man busied about decrees: [70
Condemning some to death, and some to exile;
Ransoming him, or pitying, threat'ning the other;
Holding Corioli in the name of Rome,
Even like a fawning greyhound in the leash,
To let him slip at will.
COM. Where is that slave
Which told me they had beat you to your trenches? [81
Where is he? Call him hither.
MAR. Let him alone;
He did inform the truth: but for our gentlemen,
The common file—a plague! tribunes for them!—
The mouse ne'er shunned the cat as they did budge [18]
From rascals worse than they. [90
COM. But how prevailed you?
MAR. Will the time serve to tell? I do not think.
Where is the enemy? Are you lords o' th' field?
If not, why cease you till you are so?
COM. Marcius,

[18] run.

We have at disadvantage fought, and did
Retire to win our purpose.
MAR. How lies their battle? Know you on which side [101
They have placed their men of trust?
COM. As I guess, Marcius,
Their bands i' th' vaward are the Antiates,
Of their best trust; o'er them Aufidius,
Their very heart of hope.
MAR. I do beseech you,
By all the battles wherein we have fought,
By th' blood we have shed together, by the vows [111
We have made to endure friends, that you directly
Set me against Aufidius and his Antiates;
And that you not delay the present, but,
Filling the air with swords advanced and darts,
We prove this very hour.
COM. Though I could wish
You were conducted to a gentle bath, [120
And balms applied to you, yet dare I never
Deny your asking: take your choice of those
That best can aid your action.
MAR. Those are they
That most are willing.—If any such be here—
As it were sin to doubt—that love this painting [130
Wherein you see me smeared; if any fear
Lesser his person than an ill report;
If any think brave death outweighs bad life,
And that his country's dearer than himself;
Let him, alone, or so many so minded,
Wave thus, to express his dispositiön, [138
And follow Marcius. [*They all shout, and wave their swords; take him up in their arms, and cast up their caps.*
O! me alone? Make you a sword of me?
If these shows be not outward, which of you
But is four Volsces? None of you but is
Able to bear against the great Aufidius
A shield as hard as his. A certain number,

Though thanks to all, must I select from all: the rest [150
Shall bear the business in some other fight,
As cause will be obeyed. Please you to march;
And some[19] shall quickly draw out my command,
Which men are best inclined.
COM. March on, my fellows:
Make good this ostentation, and you shall
Divide in all with us. [*Exeunt.* [160

SCENE IX

At the gates of Corioli, TITUS LARTIUS, *having delegated to a* LIEUTENANT *the care of the city, is about to depart to give aid to* COMINIUS. *Soldiers are with him, and a Scout.*

LART. So; let the ports be guarded: keep your duties,
As I have set them down. If I do send, dispatch
Those centuries to our aid; the rest will serve [11
For a short holding: if we lose the field,
We cannot keep the town.
LIEU. Fear not our care, sir.
LART. Hence, and shut your gates upon us.
Our guider, come; to th' Roman camp conduct us. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE X

On the field of battle, MARCIUS *and* AUFIDIUS *meet.*

MAR. I'll fight with none but thee; for I do hate thee
Worse than a promise-breaker.
AUF. We hate alike:
Not Afric owns a serpent I abhor
More than thy fame and envy. Fix thy foot.
MAR. Let the first budger die the other's slave, [11
And the gods doom him after!
AUF. If I fly, Marcius,
Halloo me like a hare.
MAR. Within these three hours, Tullus,
Alone I fought in your Corioli walls,

[19] B, four.

And made what work I pleased; 'tis not my blood
Wherein thou seest me masked; for thy revenge [20
Wrench up thy power to th' highest.
AUF. Wert thou the Hector
That was the whip of your bragged progeny,
Thou shouldst not scape me here.—
[*They fight, and certain Volsces come to the aid of* AUFIDIUS.
Officious, and not valiant, you have shamed me [29
In your condemnëd seconds. [*He, overcome with shame, retires; and the others are driven off by* MARCIUS.

SCENE XI

A retreat is sounded. To a flourish of trumpets COMINIUS *and Soldiers enter the Roman camp from one side, as* MARCIUS *and others enter it from another.*

COM. If I should tell thee o'er this thy day's work,
Thou't not believe thy deeds: but I'll report it
Where senators shall mingle tears with smiles, [10
Where great patricians shall attend and shrug,
I' th' end, admire; where ladies shall be frighted,
And, gladly quaked, hear more; where the dull Tribunes,
That, with the fusty plébeians, hate thine honors,
Shall say, against their hearts, "We thank the gods [20
Our Rome hath such a soldier!"
Yet cam'st thou to a morsel of this feast,
Having fully dined before.

Enter TITUS LARTIUS, *with his power, from the pursuit.*

LART. O general,
Here is the steed, we the caparison:
Hadst thou beheld—
MAR. Pray now, no more: my mother,
Who has a charter to extol her blood, [30
When she does praise me, grieves me. I have done

As you have done; that's what I can; induced
As you have been; that's for my country:
He that has but effected his good will
Hath overta'en mine act.
COM. You shall not be
The grave of your deserving; Rome must know [40
The value of her own: 'twere a concealment
Worse than a theft, no less than a traducement,
To hide your doings; and to silence that,
Which, to the spire and top of praises vouched,
Would seem but modest. Therefore, I beseech you, [49
In sign of what you are, not to reward
What you have done, before our army hear me.
MAR. I have some wounds upon me, and they smart
To hear themselves remembered.
COM. Should they not,
Well might they fester 'gainst ingratitude,
And tent themselves with death. Of all the horses, [59
Whereof we have ta'en good, and good store, of all
The treasure in this field achieved, and city,
We render you the tenth; to be ta'en forth,
Before the common distributiön,
At your only choice.
MAR. I thank you, general;
But cannot make my heart consent to take [70
A bribe to pay my sword; I do refuse it;
And stand upon my common part with those
That have beheld the doing. [*A long flourish. They all cry* "Marcius! Marcius!" *casting up their caps and lances:* COMINIUS *and* LARTIUS *stand bare.*
MAR. May these same instruments, which you profane, [80
Never sound more! When drums and trumpets shall
I' th' field prove flatterers, let courts and cities be
Made all of false-faced soothing!
When steel grows soft as is the parasite's silk,
Let them be made an overture for th' wars. [89
No more, I say! For that I have not washed
My nose, that bled, or foiled some debile wretch,
Which, without note, here's many else have done,
You shout me forth
In acclamations hyperbolical;
As if I loved my little should be dieted
In praises sauced with lies.
COM. Too modest are you; [100
More cruel to your good report than grateful
To us that give you truly. By your patience,
If 'gainst yourself you be incensed, we'll put you,
Like one that means his proper[20] harm, in manacles,
Then reason safely with you. Therefore, be it known, [110
As to us, to all the world, that Caius Marcius
Wears this war's garland; in token of the which,
My noble steed, known to the camp, I give him,
With all his trim belonging; and from this time,
For what he did before Corioli, call him,
With all th' applause and clamor of the host, [121
CAIUS MARCIUS CORIOLANUS! Bear
Th' addition nobly ever!
ALL. Caius Marcius Coriolanus!
[*Flourish. Trumpets sound, and drums.*
COR. I will go wash;
And, when my face is fair, you shall perceive
Whether I blush or no: howbeit, I thank you. [130
I mean to stride your steed, and at all times
To undercrest your good additiön

[20] own.

To th' fairness of my power.
COM. So, to our tent;
Where, ere we do repose us, we will write
To Rome of our success. You, Titus Lartius,
Must to Corioli back: send us to Rome
The best, with whom we may articulate,
For their own good and ours. [141
LART. I shall, my lord.
COR. The gods begin to mock me. I, that now
Refused most princely gifts, am bound to beg
Of my lord general.
COM. Take't; 'tis yours. What is't?
COR. I sometime lay here in Corioli
At a poor man's house; he used me kindly: [151
He cried to me; I saw him prisoner;
But then Aufidius was within my view,
And wrath o'erwhelmed my pity: I request you
To give my poor host freedom.
COM. O! well begged!
Were he the butcher of my son, he should
Be free as is the wind. Deliver him, Titus. [161
LART. Marcius, his name?
COR. By Jupiter! forgot.
I am weary; yea, my memory is tired.
Have we no wine here?
COM. Go we to our tent:
The blood upon your visage dries; 'tis time
It should be looked to: come. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE XII

Cornets play as AUFIDIUS, *wounded, returns to the Volscian camp. He is accompanied by two or three Soldiers.*

AUF. The town is ta'en!
1 SOL. 'Twill be delivered back
On good conditiön.
AUF. Conditiön!
I would I were a Roman; for I cannot,
Being a Volsce, be that I am. Condition!
What good condition can a treaty find [10
I' th' part that is at mercy?—Five times, Marcius,
I have fought with thee; so often hast thou beat me,
And wouldst do so, I think, should we encounter
As often as we eat.—By th' elements,
If e'er again I meet him beard to beard,
He is mine, or I am his: mine emulation
Hath not that honor in't it had; for where [21
I thought to crush him in an equal force—
True sword to sword—I'll potch[21] at him some way:
Or wrath or craft may get him.
1 SOL. He's the devil.
AUF. Bolder, though not so subtle. My valor's poisoned
With only suff'ring stain[22] by him; for him [31
Shall fly out of itself. Nor sleep nor sanctuary,
Being naked, sick, nor fane nor Capitol,
The prayers of priests nor times of sacrifice,
Embarquements[23] all of fury, shall lift up
Their rotten privilege and custom 'gainst
My hate to Marcius. Where I find him, were it [40
At home, upon my brother's guard, even there,
Against the hospitable canon, would I
Wash my fierce hand in's heart. Go you to th' city;
Learn how 'tis held, and what they are that must
Be hostages for Rome.
1 SOL. Will not you go?
AUF. I am attended[24] at the cypress grove: I pray you— [51
'Tis south the city mills—bring me word thither
How the world goes, that to the pace of it
I may spur on my journey.
1 SOL. I shall, sir. [*Exeunt.*

ACT TWO

SCENE I

MENENIUS, *having encountered the two Tribunes in a public place in Rome, takes the opportunity to insult them to the top of his bent.*

[21] thrust. [22] eclipse.
[23] restraints. [24] awaited.

MEN. The augurer tells me we shall have news to-night.

BRU. Good or bad?

MEN. Not according to the prayer of the people, for they love not Marcius.

SIC. Nature teaches beasts to know their friends. [11

MEN. Pray you, who does the wolf love?

SIC. The lamb.

MEN. Ay, to devour him; as the hungry plebeians would the noble Marcius.

BRU. He's a lamb indeed, that baes like a bear.

MEN. He's a bear indeed, that lives like a lamb. You two are old men; tell me one thing that I shall ask you. [21

SIC. AND BRU. Well, sir.

MEN. In what enormity is Marcius poor in, that you two have not in abundance?

BRU. He's poor in no one fault, but stored with all.

SIC. Especially in pride.

BRU. And topping all others in boasting. [30

MEN. This is strange now: do you two know how you are censured[1] here in the city, I mean of us o' the right-hand file? Do you?

BOTH. Why, how are we censured?

MEN. Because you talk of pride now, will you not be angry?

BOTH. Well, well, sir! well?

MEN. Why, 'tis no great matter; for [39 a very little thief of occasion will rob you of a great deal of patience: give your dispositions the reins, and be angry at your pleasures; at the least, if you take it as a pleasure to you in being so. You blame Marcius for being proud?

BRU. We do it not alone, sir.

MEN. I know you can do very little alone; for your helps are many, or else your actions would grow wondrous single: your abilities are too infant-like for doing much alone. You talk of pride: [51 O! that you could turn your eyes towards the napes of your necks, and make but an interior survey of your good selves. O! that you could.

BRU. What then, sir?

MEN. Why, then you should discover a brace of unmeriting, proud, violent, testy magistrates—alias fools—as any in Rome. [60

SIC. Menenius, you are known well enough too.

MEN. I am known to be a humorous patrician, and one that loves a cup of hot wine with not a drop of allaying Tiber in't; said to be something imperfect, in favoring the first complaint; hasty and tinder-like upon too trivial motion;[2] one that converses more with the buttock of the night than with the [70 forehead of the morning. What I think I utter, and spend my malice in my breath. Meeting two such wealsmen[3] as you are,—I cannot call you Lycurguses—if the drink you give me touch my palate adversely, I make a crooked face at it. I cannot say your worships have delivered the matter well when I find the ass in compound with the major part of your syllables; and, though I [80 must be content to bear with those that say you are reverend grave men, yet they lie deadly that tell you have good faces. If you see this in the map of my microcosm, follows it that I am known well enough too? What harm can your bisson conspectuities[4] glean out of this character, if I be known well enough too?

BRU. Come, sir, come, we know you well enough. [90

MEN. You know neither me, yourselves, nor anything. You are ambitious for poor knaves' caps and legs: you wear out a good wholesome forenoon in hearing a cause between an orange-wife and a fosset-seller, and then rejourn the controversy of three-pence to a second day of audience. When you are hearing a matter between party and party, if you chance to be pinched with the colic, [100 you make faces like mummers, set up the bloody flag against all patience, and, in

[1] regarded.

[2] cause.

[3] statesmen.

[4] blind perceptions.

roaring for a chamber-pot, dismiss the controversy bleeding, the more entangled by your hearing; all the peace you make in their cause is, calling both the parties knaves. You are a pair of strange ones.

Bru. Come, come, you are well understood to be a perfecter giber for the table than a necessary bencher in the Capitol.

Men. Our very priests must become [111 mockers if they shall encounter such ridiculous subjects as you are. When you speak best unto the purpose, it is not worth the wagging of your beards; and your beards deserve not so honorable a grave as to stuff a botcher's cushion, or to be entombed in an ass's pack-saddle. Yet you must be saying Marcius is proud; who, in a cheap estimation, is [120 worth all your predecessors since Deucalion, though peradventure some of the best of 'em were hereditary hangmen. Good den to your worships! more of your conversation would infect my brain, being the herdsmen of the beastly plebeians: I will be bold to take my leave of you. [Brutus *and* Sicinius *go aside.*

Enter Volumnia, Virgilia, *and* Valeria.

How now, my as fair as noble ladies [130 —and the moon, were she earthly, no nobler—whither do you follow your eyes so fast?

Vol. Honorable Menenius, my boy Marcius approaches; for the love of Juno, let's go.

Men. Ha! Marcius coming home?

Vol. Ay, worthy Menenius; and with most prosperous approbation. [139

Men. Take my cap, Jupiter, and I thank thee. Hoo! Marcius coming home!

Vol. and Vir. Nay, 'tis true.

Vol. Look, here's a letter from him: the state hath another, his wife another; and, I think, there's one at home for you.

Men. I will make my very house reel to-night. A letter for me!

Vir. Yes, certain, there's a letter for you; I saw it. [149

Men. A letter for me! It gives me an estate of seven years' health; in which time I will make a lip at the physician: the most sovereign prescription in Galen is but empiricutic, and, to this preservative, of no better report than a horse-drench. Is he not wounded? he was wont to come home wounded.

Vir. O, no, no, no!

Vol. O! he is wounded, I thank the gods for't. [160

Men. So do I too, if it be not too much. Brings 'a victory in his pocket? The wounds become him.

Vol. On's brows, Menenius; he comes the third time home with the oaken garland.

Men. Has he disciplined Aufidius soundly?

Vol. Titus Lartius writes they fought together, but Aufidius got off. [170

Men. And 'twas time for him, too, I'll warrant him that: an he had stayed by him I would not have been so 'fidiused for all the chests in Corioli, and the gold that's in them. Is the senate possessed of this?

Vol. Good ladies, let's go. Yes, yes, yes; the senate has letters from the general, wherein he gives my son the whole name of the war. He hath in this action outdone his former deeds doubly. [181

Val. In troth there's wondrous things spoke of him.

Men. Wondrous! ay, I warrant you, and not without his true purchasing.[5]

Vir. The gods grant them true!

Vol. True! pow waw.

Men. True! I'll be sworn they are true. Where is he wounded? [*To the Tribunes.*] God save your good wor- [190 ships! Marcius is coming home: he has more cause to be proud. [*To* Volumnia.] Where is he wounded?

Vol. I' th' shoulder, and i' th' left arm: there will be large cicatrices to show the people when he shall stand for his place. He received in the repulse of Tarquin seven hurts i' th' body.

Men. One i' th' neck, and two i' th' thigh, there's nine that I know. [200

Vol. He had, before this last expedition, twenty-five wounds upon him.

[5] righteous earning.

MEN. Now, it's twenty-seven: every gash was an enemy's grave. [*A shout and flourish.*] Hark! the trumpets.

VOL. These are the ushers of Marcius: before him he carries noise, and behind him he leaves tears:
Death, that dark spirit, in's nervy arm doth lie;
Which, being advanced, declines, and then men die.

A Sennet. Trumpets sound. Enter COMINIUS *and, beside him,* CORIOLANUS, *crowned with an oaken garland; with Captains, Soldiers, and a* HERALD.[6]

HER. Know, Rome, that all alone Marcius did fight
Within Corioli gates: where he hath won,
With fame, a name to Caius Marcius; these
In honor follows Coriolanus.
Welcome to Rome, renownëd Coriolanus! [*Flourish.*

ALL. Welcome to Rome, renownëd Coriolanus!

COR. No more of this; it does offend my heart:
Pray now, no more.

COM. Look, sir, your mother!

COR. O!
You have, I know, petitioned all the gods
For my prosperity. [*Kneels.*

VOL. Nay, my good soldier, up;
My gentle Marcius, worthy Caius, and
By deed-achieving honor newly named,—
What is it?—Coriolanus must I call thee?
But O! thy wife!—

COR. My gracious silence, hail!
Wouldst thou have laughed had I come coffined home,
That weep'st to see me triumph? Ah! my dear,
Such eyes the widows in Corioli wear,
And mothers that lack sons.

MEN. Now, the gods crown thee!

COR. And live you yet? [*To* VALERIA.] O my sweet lady, pardon.

VOL. I know not where to turn: O! welcome home;
And welcome, general; and ye're welcome all.

MEN. A hundred thousand welcomes: I could weep,
And I could laugh; I am light, and heavy. Welcome.
A curse begnaw at very root on's heart
That is not glad to see thee! You are three
That Rome should dote on; yet, by the faith of men,
We have some old crab-trees here at home that will not
Be grafted to your relish. Yet, welcome, warriors!
We call a nettle but a nettle, and
The faults of fools but folly.

COM. Ever right.

COR. Menenius, ever, ever.

HER. Give way there, and go on!

COR., *to* VOLUMNIA *and* VALERIA. Your hand, and yours:
Ere in our own house I do shade my head,
The good patricians must be visited;
From whom I have received not only greetings,
But with them change of honors.

VOL. I have lived
To see inherited[7] my very wishes,
And the buildings of my fancy: only
There's one thing wanting, which I doubt not but
Our Rome will cast upon thee.

COR. Know, good mother,
I had rather be their servant in my way
Than sway with them in theirs.

COM. On, to the Capitol! [*Flourish. Cornets. Exeunt in state.*

SCENE II

A few days later, we have the two Tribunes voicing their dislike of the popular praise bestowed upon CORIOLANUS.

BRU. All tongues speak of him, and the bleareëd sights
Are spectacled to see him: your prattling nurse
Into a rapture[8] lets her baby cry

[6] The original stage direction brings in Cominius and Titus Lartius; but Lartius is still in Corioli. Menenius' words, "You are three that Rome should dote on," do, however, certainly imply the presence of Titus.

[7] achieved.

[8] fit.

While she chats him: the kitchen malkin pins
Her richest lockram 'bout her reechy neck,
Clamb'ring the walls to eye him: stalls, bulks, windows,
Are smothered up, leads filled, and ridges horsed
With variable complexions, all agreeing
In earnestness to see him: seld-shown flamens
Do press among the popular throngs, and puff
To win a vulgar station: our veiled dames
Commit the war of white and damask in
Their nicely-gawded cheeks to th' wanton spoil
Of Phœbus' burning kisses: such a pother
As if that whatsoever god who leads him
Were slily crept into his human powers,
And gave him graceful posture.
SIC. On the sudden
I warrant him consul.
BRU. Then our office may,
During his power, go sleep.
SIC. He cannot temp'rately transport his honors
From where he should begin and end, but will
Lose those he hath won.
BRU. In that there's comfort.
SIC. Doubt not, the commoners, for whom we stand,
But they upon their ancient malice will
Forget, with the least cause, these his new honors,
Which that he'll give them, make I as little question
As he is proud to do't.
BRU. I heard him swear,
Were he to stand for consul, never would he
Appear i' th' market-place, nor on him put
The napless vesture of humility;
Nor, showing, as the manner is, his wounds
To th' people, beg their stinking breaths.
SIC. 'Tis right.
BRU. It was his word. O! he would miss it rather
Than carry it but by the suit o' the gentry to him
And the desire of the nobles.
SIC. I wish no better
Than have him hold that purpose and to put it
In execution.
BRU. 'Tis most like he will.
SIC. It shall be to him then, as our good wills,
A sure destruction.
BRU. So it must fall out
To him or our authorities. For an end,
We must suggest the people in what hatred
He still hath held them; that to his power he would
Have made them mules, silenced their pleaders, and
Dispropertied their freedoms; holding them,
In human action and capacity,
Of no more soul nor fitness for the world
Than camels in the war, who have their provand
Only for bearing burdens, and sore blows
For sinking under them.
SIC. This, as you say, suggested
At some time when his soaring insolence
Shall teach the people—which time shall not want,
If he be put upon't; and that's as easy
As to set dogs on sheep—will be his fire
To kindle their dry stubble; and their blaze
Shall darken him for ever.

Enter a MESSENGER.

BRU. What's the matter?
MESS. You are sent for to the Capitol. 'Tis thought
That Marcius shall be consul.
I have seen the dumb men throng to see him, and
The blind to hear him speak: matrons flung gloves,
Ladies and maids their scarfs and handkerchers

Upon him as he passed; the nobles bended,
As to Jove's statue, and the commons made
A shower and thunder with their caps and shouts:
I never saw the like.
BRU. Let's to the Capitol;
And carry with us ears and eyes for th' time,
But hearts for the event.
SIC. Have with you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

The Senate is about to meet in the Capitol. Two OFFICERS *enter, to prepare for the occasion by laying down cushions for the Senators.*

1 OFF. Come, come, they are almost here. How many stand for consulships?

2 OFF. Three, they say; but 'tis thought of every one Coriolanus will carry it.

1 OFF. That's a brave fellow; but he's vengeance proud, and loves not the common people.

2 OFF. Faith, there have been many great men that have flattered the people, who ne'er loved them; and there be many that they have loved, they know not wherefore: so that, if they love they know not why, they hate upon no better a ground. Therefore, for Coriolanus neither to care whether they love or hate him manifests the true knowledge he has in their disposition; and out of his noble carelessness lets them plainly see't.

1 OFF. If he did not care whether he had their love or no, he waved [9] indifferently 'twixt doing them neither good nor harm; but he seeks their hate with greater devotion than they can render it him; and leaves nothing undone that may fully discover him their opposite. Now, to seem to affect the malice and displeasure of the people is as bad as that which he dislikes, to flatter them for their love.

2 OFF. He hath deserved worthily of his country; and his ascent is not by such easy degrees as those who, having been supple and courteous to the people, bonneted, without any further deed to have them at all into their estimation and report; but he hath so planted his honors in their eyes, and his actions in their hearts, that for their tongues to be silent, and not confess so much, were a kind of ingrateful injury; to report otherwise were a malice, that, giving itself the lie, would pluck reproof and rebuke from every ear that heard it.

1 OFF. No more of him; he is a worthy man. Make way, they are coming.

A Sennet. Enter, with Lictors before them, COMINIUS *the Consul,* MENENIUS, CORIOLANUS, *many other* SENATORS, SICINIUS *and* BRUTUS. *The Senators take their places; the Tribunes take theirs also by themselves.*

MEN. Having determined of the Volsces, and
To send for Titus Lartius, it remains,
As the main point of this our after-meeting,
To gratify his noble service that
Hath thus stood for his country: therefore, please you,
Most reverend and grave elders, to desire
The present consul and last general
In our well-found [10] successes, to report
A little of that worthy work performed
By Caius Marcius Coriolanus, whom
We meet here both to thank and to remember
With honors like himself.
1 SEN. Speak, good Cominius:
Leave nothing out for length, and make us think
Rather our state's defective for requital
Than we to stretch it out. [*To the Tribunes.*] Masters o' th' people,
We do request your kindest ears, and, after,
Your loving motion toward the common body,
To yield what passes here.
SIC. We are convented

[9] would waver.

[10] fortunate.

Upon a pleasing treaty, and have hearts
Inclinable to honor and advance
The theme of our assembly.
BRU. Which the rather
We shall be blessed [11] to do, if he remember [91
A kinder value of the people than
He hath hereto prized them at.
MEN. That's off, that's off;
I would you rather had been silent. Please you
To hear Cominius speak?
BRU. Most willingly;
But yet my caution was more pertinent
Than the rebuke you give it. [100
MEN. He loves your people;
But tie him not to be their bedfellow.
Worthy Cominius, speak. [CORIOLANUS *rises, and offers to go away.*
Nay, keep your place.
1 SEN. Sit, Coriolanus; never shame to hear
What you have nobly done.
COR. Your honors' pardon:
I had rather have my wounds to heal again [111
Than hear say how I got them.
BRU. Sir, I hope
My words disbenched [12] you not.
COR. No, sir: yet oft,
When blows have made me stay, I fled from words.
You soothed [13] not, therefore hurt not; but your people,
I love them as they weigh. [120
MEN. Pray now, sit down.
COR. I had rather have one scratch my head i' th' sun,
When the alarum were struck, than idly sit
To hear my nothings monstered. [*Exit.*
MEN. Masters of the people,
Your multiplying spawn how can he flatter—
That's thousand to one good one—when you now see [131
He had rather venture all his limbs for honor

[11] happy.
[12] caused you to rise.
[13] flattered.

Than one on's ears to hear it. Proceed, Cominius.
COM. I shall lack voice: the deeds of Coriolanus
Should not be uttered feebly. It is held
That valor is the chiefest virtue, and
Most dignifies the haver: if it be, [140
The man I speak of cannot in the world
Be singly counterpoised. At sixteen years,
When Tarquin made a head for [14] Rome, he fought
Beyond the mark of others; our then dictator,
Whom with all praise I point at, saw him fight, [149
When with his Amazonian chin he drove
The bristled lips before him. He bestrid
An o'er-pressed Roman, and i' th' consul's view
Slew three opposers: Tarquin's self he met,
And struck him on [15] his knee: in that day's feats,
When he might act the woman in the scene,
He proved best man i' the field, and [160
for his meed
Was brow-bound with the oak. His pupil age
Man-entered thus, he waxëd like a sea,
And in the brunt of seventeen battles since
He lurched [16] all swords of the garland. For this last,
Before and in Corioli, let me say, [169
I cannot speak him home: he stopped the fliers,
And by his rare example made the coward
Turn terror into sport: as weeds before
A vessel under sail, so men obeyed,
And fell below his stem: his sword, death's stamp,
Where it did mark, it took; from face to foot [179
He was a thing of blood, whose every motion
Was timed with dying cries: alone he entered

[14] raised an army against.
[15] to. [16] robbed.

The mortal gate o' th' city, which he painted
With shunless destiny; aidless came off,
And with a sudden re-inforcement struck
Corioli like a planet. Now all's his:
When by and by the din of war 'gan pierce [190
His ready sense; then straight his doubled spirit
Re-quickened what in flesh was fatigate,
And to the battle came he; where he did
Run reeking o'er the lives of men, as if
'Twere a perpetual spoil; and, till we called
Both field and city ours, he never stood
To ease his breast with panting.
MEN. Worthy man! [200
1 SEN. He cannot but with measure fit the honors
Which we devise him.
COM. Our spoils he kicked at,
And looked upon things precious as they were
The common muck o' th' world: he covets less
Than misery itself would give, rewards
His deeds with doing them, and is content [211
To spend the time to end it.
MEN. He's right noble:
Let him be called for.
1 SEN. Call Coriolanus.
OFF. He doth appear.

Re-enter CORIOLANUS.

MEN. The senate, Coriolanus, are well pleased
To make thee consul. [220
COR. I do owe them still
My life and services.
MEN. It then remains
That you do speak to the people.
COR. I do beseech you,
Let me o'erleap that custom, for I cannot
Put on the gown, stand naked, and entreat them,
For my wounds' sake, to give their suffrage: please you [231
That I may pass this doing.
SIC. Sir, the people
Must have their voices; neither will they bate
One jot of ceremony.
MEN., *to* CORIOLANUS. Put them not to't:
Pray you, go fit you to the custom, and
Take to you, as your predecessors have,
Your honor with your form. [241
COR. It is a part
That I shall blush in acting, and might well
Be taken from the people.
BRU., *to* SICINIUS. <Mark you that?>
COR. To brag unto them, thus I did, and thus;
Show them th' unaching scars which I should hide, [250
As if I had received them for the hire
Of their breath only!
MEN. Do not stand upon't.
We recommend to you, tribunes of the people,
Our purpose to them; and to our noble consul
Wish we all joy and honor.
SEN. To Coriolanus come all joy and honor! [*Flourish. Exeunt all but* SICINIUS *and* BRUTUS. [261
BRU. You see how he intends to use the people.
SIC. May they perceive's intent! He will require them,
As if he did contemn what he requested
Should be in them to give.
BRU. Come; we'll inform them
Of our proceedings here: on th' market-place [270
I know they do attend us. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV

In the Roman Forum CITIZENS *are gathered to see* CORIOLANUS *humble himself and to give or deny him their voices for the consulate.*

1 CIT. Once, if he do require our voices, we ought not to deny him.

2 CIT. We may, sir, if we will.

3 CIT. We have power in ourselves to do it, but it is a power that we have no power to do; for if he show us his [10 wounds, and tell us his deeds, we are to

put our tongues into those wounds and speak for them; so, if he tell us his noble deeds, we must also tell him our noble acceptance of them. Ingratitude is monstrous, and for the multitude to be ingrateful were to make a monster of the multitude; of the which we, being members, should bring ourselves to be monstrous members.

1 Cit. And, to make us no better thought of, a little help will serve; for, once we stood up about the corn, he himself stuck not to call us the many-headed multitude.

3 Cit. We have been called so of many; not that our heads are some brown, some black, some abram, some bald, but that our wits are so diversely colored: and truly I think, if all our wits were to issue out of one skull, they would fly east, west, north, south; and their consent of one direct way should be at once to all the points o' the compass.

2 Cit. Think you so? Which way do you judge my wit would fly?

3 Cit. Nay, your wit will not so soon out as another man's will; 'tis strongly wedged up—in a block-head; but if it were at liberty, 'twould, sure, southward.

2 Cit. Why that way?

3 Cit. To lose itself in a fog; where, being three parts melted away with rotten dews, the fourth would return for conscience' sake, to help to get thee a wife.

2 Cit. You are never without your tricks: you may, you may.

3 Cit. Are you all resolved to give your voices? But that's no matter, the greater part carries it. I say, if he would incline to the people, there was never a worthier man.

Enter Coriolanus, *in a gown of humility, and* Menenius.

Here he comes, and in the gown of humility. Mark his behavior. We are not to stay all together, but to come by him where he stands, by ones, by twos, and by threes. He's to make his requests by particulars; wherein every one of us has a single honor, in giving him our own voices with our own tongues: therefore follow me, and I'll direct you how you shall go by him.

All. Content, content. [*Exeunt* Citizens.

Men. O, sir, you are not right: have you not known
The worthiest men have done't? [70

Cor. What must I say?
"I pray, sir,"—Plague upon't! I cannot bring
My tongue to such a pace. "Look, sir, my wounds!
I got them in my country's service, when
Some certain of your brethren roared and ran
From the noise of our own drums."

Men. O me! the gods! [80
You must not speak of that: you must desire them
To think upon you.

Cor. Think upon me! Hang 'em!
I would they would forget me, like the virtues
Which our divines lose by 'em.

Men. You'll mar all:
I'll leave you. Pray you, speak to 'em, I pray you, [90
In wholesome manner.

Cor. Bid them wash their faces,
And keep their teeth clean. [*Exit* Menenius.] So, here comes a brace.

Re-enter two Citizens.

You know the cause, sir, of my standing here?

1 Cit. We do, sir; tell us what hath brought you to't.

Cor. Mine own desert. [100

2 Cit. Your own desert!

Cor. Ay, not mine own desire.

1 Cit. How! not your own desire?

Cor. No, sir, 'twas never my desire yet to trouble the poor with begging.

1 Cit. You must think, if we give you any thing, we hope to gain by you.

Cor. Well, then, I pray, your price o' the consulship?

1 Cit. The price is, to ask it kindly. [110

Cor. Kindly! sir, I pray, let me ha't: I have wounds to show you, which shall

be yours—in private. Your good voice, sir; what say you?

2 Cit. You shall ha't, worthy sir.

Cor. A match, sir. There is in all two worthy voices begged. I have your alms: adieu.

1 Cit. But this is something odd. [119

2 Cit. An 'twere to give again,—but 'tis no matter. [*Exeunt the two* Citizens.

Re-enter two other Citizens.

Cor. Pray you now, if it may stand with the tune of your voices that I may be consul, I have here the customary gown.

3 Cit. You have deserved nobly of your country, and you have not deserved nobly.

Cor. Your enigma? [130

3 Cit. You have been a scourge to her enemies, you have been a rod to her friends; you have not indeed loved the common people.

Cor. You should account me the more virtuous, that I have not been common in my love. I will, sir, flatter my sworn brother the people, to earn a dearer estimation of them; 'tis a condition they account gentle: and, since the wis- [140 dom of their choice is rather to have my hat than my heart, I will practise the insinuating nod, and be off to them most counterfeitly; that is, sir, I will counterfeit the bewitchment of some popular man, and give it bountifully to the desirers. Therefore, beseech you I may be consul.

4 Cit. We hope to find you our friend, and therefore give you our voices heartily.

3 Cit. You have received many [151 wounds for your country.

Cor. I will not seal your knowledge with showing them. I will make much of your voices, and so trouble you no further.

Both Cit. The gods give you joy, sir, heartily! [*Exeunt.*

Cor. Most sweet voices!

Better it is to die, better to sterve,[17] [160

Than crave the hire which first we do deserve.

Why in this wolvish toge should I stand here,

To beg of Hob and Dick, that do appear,

Their needless vouches? Custom calls me to't:

What custom wills, in all things should we do't, [169

The dust on antique time would lie unswept,

And mountainous error be too highly heaped

For truth to o'er-peer. Rather than fool it so,

Let the high office and the honor go

To one that would do thus. I am half through;

The one part suffered, the other will I do.

Here come moe voices. [180

Re-enter three other Citizens.

Your voices! for your voices I have fought;

Watched for your voices; for your voices bear

Of wounds two dozen odd; battles thrice six

I have seen and heard of; for your voices have [189

Done many things, some less, some more; your voices!

Indeed, I would be consul.

5 Cit. He has done nobly, and cannot go without any honest man's voice.

6 Cit. Therefore let him be consul. The gods give him joy, and make him good friend to the people!

All. Amen, amen.

God save thee, noble consul! [*Exeunt* Citizens. [200

Cor. Worthy voices!

Re-enter Menenius, *with* Brutus *and* Sicinius.

Men. You have stood your limitation; and the tribunes

Endue you with the people's voice: remains

That, in th' official marks invested, you

Anon do meet the senate.

Cor. Is this done? [210

Sic. The custom of request you have discharged:

[17] starve.

The people do admit you, and are summoned
To meet anon, upon your approbation.
COR. Where? at the senate-house?
SIC. There, Coriolanus.
COR. May I change these garments?
SIC. You may, sir. [219
COR. That I'll straight do; and, knowing myself again,
Repair to th' senate-house.
MEN. I'll keep you company. Will you along?
BRU. We stay here for the people.
SIC. Fare you well.
[*Exeunt* CORIOLANUS *and* MENENIUS.
He has it now; and by his looks, methinks,
'Tis warm at's heart. [230
BRU. With a proud heart he wore
His humble weeds. Will you dismiss the people?

Re-enter CITIZENS.

SIC. How now, my masters! have you chose this man?
1 CIT. He has our voices, sir.
BRU. We pray the gods he may deserve your love. [239
2 CIT. Amen, sir. To my poor unworthy notice,
He mocked us when he begged our voices.
3 CIT. Certainly,
He flouted us downright.
1 CIT. No, 'tis his kind of speech; he did not mock us.
2 CIT. Not one amongst us, save yourself, but says
He used us scornfully: he should have showed us [250
His marks of merit, wounds received for's country.
SIC. Why, so he did, I am sure.
ALL. No, no; no man saw 'em.
3 CIT. He said he had wounds, which he could show in private;
And with his hat, thus waving it in scorn,
"I would be consul," says he: "agëd custom, [259
But by your voices, will not so permit me;
Your voices therefore." When we granted that,
Here was, "I thank you for your voices, thank you,
Your most sweet voices: now you have left your voices
I have no further with you." Was not this mockery? [269
SIC. Why, either were you ignorant to see't,
Or, seeing it, of such childish friendliness
To yield your voices?
BRU. Could you not have told him,
As you were lessoned, when he had no power,
But was a petty servant to the state,
He was your enemy, ever spake against
Your liberties and the charters that you bear [280
I' th' body of the weal; and now, arriving
A place of potency and sway o' th' state,
If he should still malignantly remain
Fast foe to th' plébeii, your voices might
Be curses to yourselves? You should have said
That, as his worthy deeds did claim no less
Than what he stood for, so his gracious nature [290
Would think upon you for your voices and
Translate his malice towards you into love,
Standing your friendly lord.
SIC. Thus to have said,
As you were fore-advised, had touched his spirit
And tried his inclination; from him plucked [300
Either his gracious promise, which you might,
As cause had called you up, have held him to;
Or else it would have galled his surly nature,
Which easily endures not article
Tying him to aught; so, putting him to rage, [309
You should have ta'en th' advantage of his choler,
And passed him unelected.
BRU. Did you perceive
He did solicit you in free contempt,

When he did need your loves, and do you think
That his contempt shall not be bruising to you
When he hath power to crush? Why, had your bodies [320
No heart among you? or had you tongues to cry
Against the rectorship of judgment?
SIC. Have you
Ere now denied the asker? and now again
Of him that did not ask, but mock, bestow
Your sued-for tongues? [329
3 CIT. He's not confirmed; we may deny him yet.
2 CIT. And will deny him:
I'll have five hundred voices of that sound.
1 CIT. Ay, twice five hundred and their friends to piece 'em.
BRU. Get you hence instantly, and tell those friends,
They have chose a consul that will from them take [340
Their liberties; make them of no more voice
Than dogs, that are as often beat for barking
As therefore kept to do so.
SIC. Let them assemble;
And, on a safer judgment, all revoke
Your ignorant election. Enforce his pride, [349
And his old hate unto you; besides, forget not
With what contempt he wore the humble weed,
How in his suit he scorned you; but your loves,
Thinking upon his services, took from you
Th' apprehension of his present portance,
Which most gibingly, ungravely, he did fashion [360
After the inveterate hate he bears you.
BRU. Lay
A fault on us, your tribunes; that we labored—
No impediment between—but that you must
Cast your election on him.
SIC. Say, you chose him
More after our commandment than as guided [370
By your own true affections; and that your minds,
Pre-occupied with what you rather must do
Than what you should, made you against the grain
To voice him consul: lay the fault on us.
BRU. Ay, spare us not. Say we read lectures to you, [379
How youngly he began to serve his country,
How long continued, and what stock he springs of,
The noble house o' th' Marcians, from whence came
That Ancus Marcius, Numa's daughter's son,
Who, after great Hostilius, here was king; [389
Of the same house Publius and Quintus were,
That our best water brought by conduits hither;
[And Censorinus that was so surnamed—]
And nobly namëd so, twice being censor,—
Was his great ancestor.
SIC. One thus descended,
That hath, beside, well in his person [400 wrought
To be set high in place, we did commend
To your remembrances: but you have found,
Scaling his present bearing with his past,
That he's your fixëd enemy, and revoke
Your sudden approbation.
BRU. Say you ne'er had done't—
Harp on that still—but by our putting on; [410
And presently, when you have drawn your number,
Repair to the Capitol.
ALL. We will so; almost all

Repent in their election. [*Exeunt* CITIZENS.
BRU. Let them go on;
This mutiny were better put in hazard
Than stay, past doubt, for greater.
If, as his nature is, he fall in rage
With their refusal, both observe and answer
The vantage of his anger.
SIC. To th' Capitol, come:
We will be there before the stream o' th' people;
And this shall seem, as partly 'tis, their own,
Which we have goaded onward. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THREE

SCENE I

A noise of cornets announces the arrival of CORIOLANUS, COMINIUS, LARTIUS, MENENIUS, SENATORS, *and* PATRICIANS *into a public place in Rome. They are engaged in conversation as they enter.*

COR. Tullus Aufidius, then, had made new head?[1]
LART. He had, my lord; and that it was which caused
Our swifter composition.
COR. So, then, the Volsces stand but as at first,
Ready, when time shall prompt them, to make road[2]
Upon's again.
COM. They are worn,[3] lord consul, so
That we shall hardly in our ages see
Their banners wave again.
COR. Saw you Aufidius?
LART. On safe-guard he came to me; and did curse
Against the Volsces, for they had so vildly
Yielded the town: he is retired to Antium.
COR. Spoke he of me?
LART. He did, my lord.
COR. How? what?
LART. How often he had met you, sword to sword;
That of all things upon the earth he hated
Your person most; that he would pawn his fortunes
To hopeless restitution, so he might
Be called your vanquisher.
COR. At Antium lives he?
LART. At Antium.
COR. I wish I had a cause to seek him there,
To oppose his hatred fully. Welcome home.

Enter SICINIUS *and* BRUTUS.

<Behold! these are the tribunes of the people,
The tongues o' th' common mouth: I do despise them;
For they do prank them in authority
Against all noble sufferance.>
SIC. Pass no further.
COR. Ha! what is that?
BRU. It will be dangerous to go on: no further.
COR. What makes this change?
MEN. The matter?
COM. Hath he not passed the noble and the common?
BRU. Cominius, no.
COR. Have I had children's voices?
1 SEN. Tribunes, give way; he shall to th' market-place.
BRU. The people are incensed against him.
SIC. Stop,
Or all will fall in broil.
COR. Are these your herd?
Must these have voices, that can yield them now,
And straight disclaim their tongues? What are your offices?
You being their mouths, why rule you not their teeth?
Have you not set them on?
MEN. <Be calm, be calm.>
COR. It is a purposed thing, and grows by plot,
To curb the will of the nobility:
Suffer't, and live with such as cannot rule
Nor ever will be ruled.
BRU. Call't not a plot:
The people cry you mocked them, and of late,

[1] raised a new army.
[2] inroads.
[3] exhausted.

When corn was given them gratis, you repined;
Scandalled the suppliants for the people, called them
Time-pleasers, flatterers, foes to nobleness.
COR. Why, this was known before.
BRU. Not to them all.
COR. Have you informed them sithence?
BRU. How! I inform them!
COM. You are like to do such business.
BRU. Not unlike,
Each way, to better yours.
COR. Why then should I be consul? By yond clouds,
Let me deserve so ill as you, and make me
Your fellow tribune.
SIC. You show too much of that
For which the people stir; if you will pass
To where you are bound, you must inquire your way,
Which you are out of, with a gentler spirit;
Or never be so noble as a consul,
Nor yoke with him for tribune.
MEN. Let's be calm.
COM. The people are abused.[4]—Set on! —This palt'ring
Becomes not Rome, nor has Coriolanus
Deserved this so dishonored rub, laid falsely
I' th' plain way of his merit.
COR. Tell me of corn!
This was my speech, and I will speak't again—
MEN. Not now, not now.
1 SEN. Not in this heat, sir, now.
COR. Now, as I live, I will.—My nobler friends,
I crave their pardons:
For the mutable, rank-scented many,[5] let them
Regard me as I do not flatter, and
Therein behold themselves: I say again,
In soothing them we nourish 'gainst our senate
The cockle of rebellion, insolence, sedition,
Which we ourselves have ploughed for, sowed and scattered,
By mingling them with us, the honored number,
Who lacked not virtue—no, nor power—but that
Which they have given to beggars.
MEN. Well, no more!
1 SEN. No more words, we beseech you!
COR. How! no more?
As for my country I have shed my blood,
Not fearing outward force, so shall my lungs
Coin words, till they decay, against those measles,
Which we disdain should tetter us, yet sought
The very way to catch them.
BRU. You speak o' th' people,
As if you were a god to punish, not
A man of their infirmity.
SIC. 'Twere well
We let the people know't.
MEN. What, what? his choler.
COR. "Choler"!
Were I as patient as the midnight sleep,
By Jove, 'twould be my mind!
SIC. It is a mind
That shall remain a poison where it is,
Not poison any further.
COR. "Shall remain!"
Hear you this Triton of the minnows! mark you
His absolute "shall"!
COM. 'Twas from the canon.
COR. "Shall!"
O good—but most unwise—patricians! why,
You grave, but wreakless, senators, have you thus
Given Hydra here to choose an officer,
That with his peremptory "shall," being but
The horn and noise o' th' monster's, wants not spirit
To say he'll turn your current in a ditch,
And make your channel his? If he have power,
Then vail[6] your ignorance; if none, awake

[4] misled.
[5] B, meynie=retinue.
[6] defer.

Your dangerous lenity. If you are learn'd,
Be not as common fools; if you are not,
Let them have cushions by you. You are plebeians
If they be senators; and they are no less,
When, both your voices blended, the great'st taste [190
Most palates theirs. They choose their magistrate,
And such a one as he, who puts his "shall,"
His popular "shall," against a graver bench
Than ever frowned in Greece. By Jove himself!
It makes the consuls base; and my soul aches [200
To know, when two authorities are up,
Neither supreme, how soon confusiön
May enter 'twixt the gap of both and take
The one by th' other.

COM. Well, on to th' market-place.

COR. Whoever gave that counsel, to give forth
The corn o' th' store-house gratis, as 'twas used [210
Sometime in Greece—

MEN. Well, well; no more of that!

COR. Though there the people had more absolute pow'r,
I say, they nourished disobedience, fed
The ruin of the state.

BRU. Why, shall the people give
One that speaks thus their voice?

COR. I'll give my reasons,
More worthier than their voices. They know the corn [221
Was not our recompense, resting well assured
They ne'er did service for't.—Being pressed to th' war,
Even when the navel of the state was touched,
They would not thread the gates: this kind of service
Did not deserve corn gratis. Being i' th' war, [231
Their mutinies and revolts, wherein they showed
Most valor, spoke not for them. Th' accusation
Which they have often made against the senate,
All cause unborn could never be the motive[7]
Of our so frank donation. Well, [240 what then?
How shall this bosom multiplied[8] digest
The senate's courtesy? Let deeds express
What's like to be their words: "We did request it;
We are the greater poll, and in true fear
They gave us our demands." Thus we debase
The nature of our seats, and make the rabble [250
Call our cares, fears; which will in time
Break ope the locks o' th' senate, and bring in
The crows to peck the eagles.

MEN. Come, enough!

BRU. Enough, with over-measure.

COR. No, take more!
What may be sworn by, both divine and human,
Seal what I end withal! This double worship,[9] [261
Where one part does disdain with cause, the other
Insult without all reason; where gentry, title, wisdom,
Cannot conclude, but by the yea and no
Of general ignorance; it must omit
Real necessities, and give way the while
To unstable slightness:[10] purpose so barred, it follows [270
Nothing is done to purpose. Therefore, beseech you,—
You that will be less fearful than discreet,
That love the fundamental part of state
More than you doubt the change on't, that prefer
A noble life before a long, and wish
To jump[11] a body with a dangerous physic [280

[7] B, native.
[8] The usual emendation of this is "bisson multitude."
[9] authority. [10] weakness. [11] hazard.

That's sure of death without it, at once pluck out
The multitudinous tongue; let them not lick
The sweet which is their poison. Your dishonor
Mangles true judgment, and bereaves the state
Of that integrity which should become't,
Not having the power to do the good it would, [291
For th' ill which doth control't.

BRU. He has said enough.

SIC. He has spoken like a traitor, and shall answer
As traitors do.

COR. Thou wretch! despite o'erwhelm thee!—
What should the people do with these bald tribunes? [300
On whom depending, their obedience fails
To th' greater bench. In a rebelliön,
When what's not meet, but what must be, was law,
Then were they chosen: in a better hour,
Let what is meet be said it must be meet,
And throw their power i' th' dust.

BRU. Manifest treason!

SIC. This a consul? no.

BRU. The ædiles, ho!—Let him be apprehended. [311

Enter an Ædile.

SIC. Go, call the people; [*Exit Ædile*] in whose name, myself
Attach thee as a traitorous innovator,
A foe to th' public weal; obey, I charge thee,
And follow to thine answer.

COR. Hence, old goat! [320

SEN. We'll surety him.

COM. Ag'd sir, hands off.

COR. Hence, rotten thing! or I shall shake thy bones
Out of thy garments.

SIC., *calling*. Help, ye citizens!

Re-enter Ædiles, with Others, and a rabble of CITIZENS.

MEN. On both sides more respect.

SIC. Here's he that would take from you all your power. [330

BRU. Seize him, ædiles!

CITIZENS. Down with him! down with him!

SENATORS. Weapons! weapons! weapons! [*They all bustle about* CORIOLANUS.]
Tribunes!—patricians!—citizens!—What ho!—Sicinius!—Brutus!—Coriolanus!—Citizens!—Peace! Peace! Peace!—Stay! Hold! Peace!

MEN. What is about to be?—I am out of breath; [341
Confusion's near; I cannot speak. You, tribunes
To th' people!—Coriolanus, patience!—
Speak, good Sicinius.

SIC. Hear me, people; peace!

CITIZENS. Let's hear our tribune.—Peace!—Speak, speak, speak.

SIC. You are at point to lose your liberties: [350
Marcius would have all from you—Marcius,
Whom late you have named for consul.

MEN. Fie, fie, fie!
This is the way to kindle, not to quench.

1 SEN. To unbuild the city and to lay all flat.

SIC. What is the city but the people?

CITIZENS. True,
The people are the city. [360

BRU. By the consent of all, we were established
The people's magistrates.

CITIZENS. You so remain.

MEN. And so are like to do.

COM. That is the way to lay the city flat;
To bring the roof to the foundatiön,
And bury all, which yet distinctly ranges,
In heaps and piles of ruin. [370

SIC. This deserves death.

BRU. Or let us stand to our authority
Or let us lose it. We do here pronounce,
Upon the part o' th' people, in[12] whose power
We were elected theirs, Marcius is worthy
Of present death.

SIC. Therefore lay hold of him;
Bear him to th' rock Tarpeian, and from thence [380

[12] by.

Into destruction cast him.
BRU. Ædiles, seize him!
CITIZENS. Yield, Marcius, yield!
MEN. Hear me one word;
Beseech you, tribunes, hear me but a word.
ÆD. Peace, peace!
MEN. Be that you seem, truly your country's friends,
And temp'rately proceed to what you would [391
Thus violently redress.
BRU. Sir, those cold ways,
That seem like prudent helps, are very poisonous
Where the disease is violent.—Lay hands upon him,
And bear him to the rock.
COR. No, I'll die here.
[*Drawing his sword.* [400
There's some among you have beheld me fighting:
Come, try upon yourselves what you have seen me.
MEN. Down with that sword!—Tribunes, withdraw awhile.
BRU. Lay hands upon him.
MEN. Help Marcius; help,
You that be noble; help him, young and old! [410
CITIZENS. Down with him! down with him! [*In this mutiny the Tribunes, the Ædiles, and the People are beat in.*
MEN., *to* CORIOLANUS. Go, get you to your house; be gone, away!
All will be naught else.
2 SEN. Get you gone.
COR. Stand fast;
We have as many friends as enemies.
MEN. Shall it be put to that? [420
1 SEN. The gods forbid!—
I prithee, noble friend, home to thy house;
Leave us to cure this cause.
MEN. For 'tis a sore upon us,
You cannot tent yourself: be gone, beseech you.
COM. Come, sir, along with us.
COR. I would they were barbarians—as they are, [430
Though in Rome littered—not Romans—as they are not,
Though calved i' th' porch o' th' Capitol—
MEN. Be gone;
Put not your worthy[13] rage into your tongue;
One time will owe another.
COR. On fair ground
I could beat forty of them. [440
MEN. I could myself
Take up a brace o' th' best of them; yea, the two tribunes.
COM. But now 'tis odds beyond arithmetic;
And manhood is called foolery when it stands
Against a falling fabric.—Will you hence,
Before the tag return? whose rage doth rend [450
Like interrupted waters and o'erbear
What they are used to bear.
MEN. Pray you, be gone.
I'll try whether my old wit be in request
With those that have but little: this must be patched
With cloth of any color.
COM. Nay, come away.
[*Exeunt* CORIOLANUS, COMINIUS, *and Others.* [460
1 PAT. This man has marred his fortune.
MEN. His nature is too noble for the world:
He would not flatter Neptune for his trident,
Or Jove for's power to thunder. His heart's his mouth:
What his breast forges, that his tongue must vent; [470
And, being angry, does forget that ever
He heard the name of death. [*A noise within.*] Here's goodly work!
2 PAT. I would they were a-bed!
MEN. I would they were in Tiber! What the vengeance!
Could he not speak 'em fair?

Re-enter BRUTUS *and* SICINIUS, *with the rabble.*

SIC. Where is this viper [480

[13] warranted.

That would depopulate the city and
Be every man himself?
MEN. You worthy tribunes—
SIC. He shall be thrown down the Tarpeian rock
With rigorous hands: he hath resisted law,
And therefore law shall scorn him further trial
Than the severity of the public power [490
Which he so sets at nought.
1 CIT. He shall well know
The noble tribunes are the people's mouths,
And we their hands.
CITIZENS. He shall, sure on't!
MEN. Sir, sir!
SIC. Peace!
MEN. Do not cry havoc, where you should but hunt [500
With modest warrant.
SIC. Sir, how comes't that you
Have holp to make this rescue?
MEN. Hear me speak:
As I do know the consul's worthiness,
So can I name his faults.
SIC. Consul! what consul?
MEN. The Consul Coriolanus.
BRU. He consul!
CITIZENS. No, no, no, no, no. [510
MEN. If, by the tribunes' leave, and yours, good people,
I may be heard, I would crave a word or two,
The which shall turn you to no further harm
Than so much loss of time.
SIC. Speak briefly, then;
For we are péremptory to dispatch [519
This viperous traitor. To eject him hence
Were but our[14] danger, and to keep him here
Our certain death; therefore it is decreed
He dies to-night.
MEN. Now the good gods forbid
That our renownëd Rome, whose gratitude [529
Towards her deservëd children is enrolled
In Jove's own book, like an unnatural dam
Should now eat up her own!
SIC. He's a disease that must be cut away.
MEN. O! he's a limb that has but a disease;
Mortal to cut it off; to cure it easy.
What has he done to Rome that's worthy death? [540
Killing our enemies, the blood he hath lost,
Which, I dare vouch, is more than that he hath
By many an ounce, he dropped it for his country;
And what is left, to lose it by his country,
Were to us all, that do't and suffer it,
A brand to th' end o' th' world. [549
SIC. This is clean kam.[15]
BRU. Merely[16] awry: when he did love his country,
It honored him.
MEN. The service of the foot
Being once gangrened, is ['t] not then respected
For what before it was?
BRU. We'll hear no more.—
Pursue him to his house, and pluck him thence, [560
Lest his infection, being of catching nature,
Spread further.
MEN. One word more, one word!
This tiger-footed rage, when it shall find
The harm of unscanned[17] swiftness, will, too late,
Tie leaden pounds to's heels. Proceed by process; [569
Lest parties—as he is beloved—break out,
And sack great Rome with Romans.
BRU. If 'twere so,—
SIC. What do ye talk?
Have we not had a taste of his obedience?
Our ædiles smote? ourselves resisted? Come!
MEN. Consider this: he has been bred i' th' wars [579

[14] B, one.
[15] from the purpose.
[16] utterly [17] unthinking.

Since he could draw a sword, and is ill schooled
In bolted language; meal and bran together
He throws without distinction. Give me leave,
I'll go to him, and undertake to bring him
Where he shall answer by a lawful form—
In peace—to his utmost peril.
1 SEN. Noble tribunes, [590
It is the húmane way: the other course
Will prove too bloody, and the end of it
Unknown to the beginning.
SIC. Noble Menenius,
Be you, then, as the people's officer.—
Masters, lay down your weapons.
BRU. Go not home.
SIC. Meet on the market-place.—We'll attend [18] you there,
Where, if you bring not Marcius, we'll proceed [601
In our first way.
MEN. I'll bring him to you.
[*To the* SENATORS.] Let me desire your company. He must come,
Or what is worst will follow.
1 SEN. Pray you, let's to him.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

CORIOLANUS, *returned home in high dudgeon, is holding forth to certain Patrician friends upon the iniquities of the Commonalty and his own superiority.*

COR. Let them pull all about mine ears; present me
Death on the wheel, or at wild horses' heels;
Or pile ten hills on the Tarpeian rock,
That the precipitation might down [10
stretch
Below the beam of sight; yet will I still
Be thus to them.
1 PAT. You do the nobler.
COR. I muse my mother
Does not approve me further, who was wont
To call them woollen vassals, things created
To buy and sell with groats,[19] to show bare heads [21
In congregations, to yawn, be still, and wonder,
When one but of my ordinance [20] stood up
To speak of peace or war.

Enter VOLUMNIA.

I talk of you:
Why did you wish me milder? Would you have me
False to my nature? Rather say I play
The man I am. [31
VOL. O! sir, sir, sir,
I would have had you put your power well on
Before you had worn it out.
COR. Let go!
VOL. You might have been enough the man you are
With striving less to be so: lesser had been [40
The thwartings of your disposition if
You had not showed them how you were disposed,
Ere they lacked power to cross you.
COR. Let them hang!
VOL. Ay, and burn too!

Enter MENENIUS *and* SENATORS.

MEN. Come, come; you have been too rough, something too rough;
You must return and mend it. [50
1 SEN. There's no remedy,
Unless, by not so doing, our good city
Cleave in the midst, and perish.
VOL. Pray be counselled.
I have a heart as little apt as yours,
But yet a brain that leads my use of anger
To better vantage.
MEN. Well said, noble woman!
Before he should thus stoop to th' herd, but that [61
The violent fit o' th' time craves it as physic
For the whole state, I would put mine armor on,
Which I can scarcely bear.
COR. What must I do?

[18] await.

[19] pieces of 8 cents.
[20] rank.

MEN. Return to th' tribunes.
COR. Well, what then? what then?
MEN. Repent what you have spoke. [70
COR. For them! I cannot do it to the gods;
Must I, then, do't to them?
VOL. You are too aboslute;
Though therein you can never be too noble,
But when extremities speak. I have heard you say,
Honor and policy, like unsevered friends,
I' th' war do grow together: grant that, and tell me, [81
In peace what each of them by th' other lose,
That they combine not there.
COR. Tush, tush!
MEN. A good demand.
VOL. If it be honor in your wars to seem
The same you are not—which, for your best ends, [90
You adopt your policy—how is it less or worse
That it shall hold companionship in peace
With honor, as in war, since that to both
It stands in like request?
COR. Why force you this?
VOL. Because that now it lies you on to speak
To th' people; not by your instructiön,
Nor by th' matter which your heart prompts you, [101
But with such words that are but roted [21] in
Your tongue, though but bastards and syllables
Of no allowance to your bosom's truth.
Now, this no more dishonors you at all
Than to take in a town with gentle words,
Which else would put you to your fortune and [111
The hazard of much blood.
I would dissemble with my nature where
My fortunes and my friends at stake required
I should do so in honor: I am in this,
Your wife, your son, these senators, the nobles;
And you will rather show our general louts [120
How you can frown than spend a fawn upon 'em,
For the inheritance of their loves and safeguard
Of what that want might ruin.
MEN. Noble lady!—
Come, go with us; speak fair; you may salve so,
Not what is dangerous present, but the loss [130
Of what is past.
VOL. I prithee now, my son,
Go to them, with this bonnet in thy hand;
And, thus far having stretched it—here be with them,
Thy knee bussing the stones; for in such business
Action is eloquence, and the eyes of th' ignorant [140
More learnëd than the ears—waving thy head,
Which often, thus, correcting thy stout heart,
Now humble as the ripest mulberry
That will not hold the handling, say to them
Thou art their soldier, and, being bred in broils,
Hast not the soft way which, thou dost confess, [151
Were fit for thee to use as they to claim,
In asking their good loves; but thou wilt frame
Thyself, forsooth, hereafter theirs, so far
As thou hast power and person.
MEN. This but done,
Even as she speaks, why, their hearts were yours;
For they have pardons, being asked, [160 as free
As words to little purpose.
VOL. Prithee now,
Go, and be ruled; although I know thou hadst rather
Follow thine enemy in a fiery gulf

[21] learned by rote; but the word should perhaps be "rooted."

Than flatter him in a bower. Here is Cominius.

Enter COMINIUS.

COM. I have been i' th' market-place; and, sir, 'tis fit [171
You make strong party, or defend yourself
By calmness or by absence: all's in anger.
MEN. Only fair speech.
COM. I think 'twill serve if he
Can thereto frame his spirit.
VOL. He must, and will—
Prithee now, say you will, and go about it. [180
COR. Must I go show them my unbarbëd sconce?
Must I with my base tongue give to my noble heart
A lie that it must bear? Well, I will do't:
Yet, were there but this single plot to lose,
This mould of Marcius, they to dust should grind it, [190
And throw't against the wind. To th' market-place!
You have put me now to such a part which never
I shall discharge to th' life.
COM. Come, come, we'll prompt you.
VOL. I prithee now, sweet son, as thou hast said
My praises made thee first a soldier, so,
To have my praise for this, perform a part [201
Thou hast not done before.
COR. Well, I must do't:
Away, my disposition; and possess me,
Some harlot's spirit! My throat of war be turned,
Which quirëd with my drum, into a pipe
Small as a eunuch, or the virgin voice
That babies lull asleep! The smiles of knaves
Tent in my cheeks, and school-boys' tears take up [211
The glasses of my sight! A beggar's tongue
Make motion through my lips, and my armed knees,
Who bowed but in my stirrup, bend like his
That hath received an alms!—I will not do't,
Lest I surcease to honor mine own [220 truth,
And by my body's action teach my mind
A most inherent baseness.
VOL. At thy choice then:
To beg of thee it is my more dishonor
Than thou of them. Come all to ruin! let
Thy mother rather feel thy pride than fear
Thy dangerous stoutness, for I mock at death [231
With as big heart as thou. Do as thou list;
Thy valiantness was mine—thou suck'st it from me—
But owe thy pride thyself.
COR. Pray, be content:
Mother, I am going to the market-place;
Chide me no more. I'll mountebank their loves, [240
Cog their hearts from them, and come home beloved
Of all the trades in Rome. Look, I am going:
Commend me to my wife. I'll return consul,
Or never trust to what my tongue can do
I' th' way of flattery further.
VOL. Do your will. [*Exit.*
COM. Away! the tribunes do attend you: arm yourself [251
To answer mildly; for they are prepared
With accusations, as I hear, more strong
Than are upon you yet.
MEN. The word is "mildly."
COR. Pray you, let us go:
Let them accuse me by invention, I
Will answer in mine honor.
MEN. Ay, but mildly.
COR. Well, mildly be it then. Mildly!
[*Exeunt.* [261

SCENE III

BRUTUS *is in the Forum with* SICINIUS, *awaiting the outcome of the attempt to bring* CORIOLANUS *to reason, and instruct-*

ing him how to proceed in the offensive against the enemy of their class.

BRU. In this point charge him home, that he affects
Tyrannical power: if he evade us there,
Enforce him with his envy to the people,
And that the spoil got on the Antiates
Was ne'er distributed.— [11

Enter an ÆDILE.

What, will he come?
ÆD. He's coming.
BRU. How accompanied?
ÆD. With old Menenius, and those senators
That always favored him.
SIC. Have you a catalogue
Of all the voices that we have procured,
Set down by th' poll? [21
ÆD. I have; 'tis ready.
SIC. Have you collected them by tribes?
ÆD. I have.
SIC. Assemble presently the people hither;
And when they hear me say, "It shall be so,
I' th' right and strength o' th' commons," be it either [30
For death, for fine, or banishment, then let them,
If I say, "fine," cry "fine," if "death," cry "death,"
Insisting on the old prerogative
And power i' th' truth o' th' cause.
ÆD. I shall inform them.
BRU. And, when such time they have begun to cry,
Let them not cease, but, with a din confused, [41
Enforce the present execution
Of what we chance to sentence.
ÆD. Very well.
SIC. Make them be strong and ready for this hint,
When we shall hap to give't them.
BRU. Go, about it!
[*Exit* ÆDILE.
Put him to choler straight. He hath been used [51
Ever to conquer, and to have his worth
Of contradiction: being once chafed, he cannot
Be reined again to temperance; then he speaks
What's in his heart; and that is there which looks
With us to break his neck.
SIC. Well, here he comes. [60

Enter CORIOLANUS, MENENIUS, COMINIUS, SENATORS, *and* PATRICIANS.

MEN. Calmly, I do beseech you.
COR. Ay, as an ostler, that, for the poorest piece,
Will bear the "knave" by th' volume.— Th' honored gods
Keep Rome in safety, and the chairs of justice
Supplied with worthy men! plant love among us! [71
Throng our large temples with the shows of peace,
And not our streets with war!
1 SEN. Amen, amen!
MEN. A noble wish!

Re-enter ÆDILE, *with* CITIZENS.

SIC. Draw near, ye people.
ÆD. List to your tribunes; audience; peace, I say. [80
COR. First hear me speak.
BOTH TRI. Well, say!—Peace, ho!
COR. Shall I be charged no further than this present?
Must all determine here?
SIC. I do demand,
If you submit you to the people's voices,
Allow their officers, and are content
To suffer lawful censure for such faults
As shall be proved upon you? [91
COR. I am content.
MEN. Lo! citizens, he says he is content:
The warlike service he has done, consider; think
Upon the wounds his body bears, which show
Like graves i' th' holy churchyard.
COR. Scratches with briers, [100
Scars to move laughter only.

MEN. Consider, further,
That, when he speaks not like a citizen,
You find him like a soldier: do not take
His rougher accents for malicious sounds,
But, as I say, such as become a soldier,
Rather than envy[22] you.
COM. Well, well; no more.
COR. What is the matter,
That, being passed for consul with full voice,
I am so dishonored that the very hour
You take it off again?
SIC. Answer to us.
COR. Say, then: 'tis true, I ought so.
SIC. We charge you, that you have contrived to take
From Rome all seasoned office, and to wind
Yourself into a power tyrannical;
For which you are a traitor to the people.
COR. How! Traitor!
MEN. <Nay, temperately; your promise.>
COR. The fires i' th' lowest hell fold-in the people!
Call me their traitor!—Thou injurious tribune!
Within thine eyes sat twenty thousand deaths,
In thy hands clutched as many millions, in
Thy lying tongue both numbers, I would say,
"Thou liest" unto thee with a voice as free
As I do pray the gods.
SIC. Mark you this, people?
CITIZENS. To th' rock!—to th' rock with him!
SIC. Peace!
We need not put new matter to his charge:
What you have seen him do, and heard him speak,
Beating your officers, cursing yourselves,
Opposing laws with strokes, and here defying
Those whose great power must try him; even this,
So criminal and in such capital kind,
Deserves th' extremest death.
BRU. But, since he hath
Served well for Rome—
COR. What do you prate of service?
BRU. I talk of that, that know it.
COR. You!
MEN. <Is this the promise that you made your mother?>
COM. Know, I pray you—
COR. I'll know no further:
Let them pronounce the steep Tarpeian death,
Vagabond exile, flaying, pent to linger
But with a grain a day, I would not buy
Their mercy at the price of one fair word,
Nor check my courage for what they can give,
To have't with saying, "Good morrow."
SIC. For that he has,
As much as in him lies, from time to time
Envied against the people, seeking means
To pluck away their power, as now at last
Given hostile strokes, and that not in the presence
Of dreaded justice, but on the ministers
That doth distribute it; in the name o' th' people,
And in the power of us the tribunes, we,
Ev'n from this instant, banish him our city,
In peril of precipitatiön
From off the rock Tarpeian, never more
To enter our Rome gates: i' th' people's name,
I say, it shall be so.
CITIZENS. It shall be so; it shall be so. —Let him away.—He's banished; and it shall be so!
COM. Hear me, my masters, and my common friends—
SIC. He's sentenced; no more hearing.
COM. Let me speak:
I have been consul, and can show for Rome
Her enemies' marks upon me. I do love
My country's good with a respect more tender,
More holy, and profound, than mine own life,

[22] show malice towards.

My dear wife's estimate,[23] her womb's increase,
And treasure of my loins; then if I would
Speak that—
SIC. We know your drift: speak what?
BRU. There's no more to be said, but he is banished,
As enemy to the people and his country:
It shall be so. [211
CITIZENS. It shall be so; it shall be so.
COR. You common cry of curs! whose breath I hate
As reek o' th' rotten fens, whose loves I prize
As the dead carcases of unburied men
That do corrupt my air, I banish you;
And here remain with your uncertainty!
Let every feeble rumor shake your [220 hearts!
Your enemies, with nodding of their plumes,
Fan you into despair! Have the power still
To banish your defenders; till at length
Your ignorance—which finds not, till it feels—
Making but reservation of yourselves—
Still your own foes—deliver you as most
Abated captives to some natiön [231
That won you without blows! Despising,
For you, the city, thus I turn my back:
There is a world elsewhere. [*Exeunt* CORIOLANUS, COMINIUS, MENENIUS, SENATORS, *and* PATRICIANS.
ÆD. The people's enemy is gone, is gone! [239
CITIZENS. Our enemy is banished!—He is gone!—Hoo! hoo! [*They all shout and throw up their caps.*
SIC. Go, see him out at gates, and follow him,
As he hath followed you, with all despite;
Give him deserved vexation. Let a guard
Attend us through the city.
CITIZENS. Come, come,—let us see him out at gates! come! The gods preserve our noble tribunes! Come! [*They rush forth pell-mell.* [251

[23] fair fame.

ACT FOUR

SCENE I

CORIOLANUS, *in accordance with the decree of banishment passed upon him, is about to leave Rome.* VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, MENENIUS, COMINIUS, *and several young* PATRICIANS *have accompanied him to one of the gates.*

COR. Come, leave your tears: a brief farewell: the beast
With many heads butts me away. Nay, mother, [10
Where is your ancient courage? you were used
To say extremity was the trier of spirits;
That common chances common men could bear;
That when the sea was calm all boats alike
Showed mastership in floating; fortune's blows,
When most struck home, being gentle, wounded, craves [20
A noble cunning:[1] you were used to load me
With precepts that would make invincible
The heart that conned them.
VIR. O heavens! O heavens!
COR. Nay, I prithee, woman,—
VOL. Now the red pestilence strike all trades in Rome,
And occupations perish!
COR. What, what, what! [30
I shall be loved when I am lacked. Nay, mother,
Resume that spirit, when you were wont to say,
If you had been the wife of Hercules,
Six of his labors you'd have done, and saved
Your husband so much sweat.—Cominius,
Droop not; adieu.—Farewell, my wife! my mother! [40
I'll do well yet.—Thou old and true Menenius,
Thy tears are salter than a younger man's,
And venomous to thine eyes.—My sometime general,

[1] wisdom.

I have seen thee stern, and thou hast oft beheld
Heart-hard'ning spectacles; tell these sad women
'Tis fond to wail inevitable strokes
As 'tis to laugh at 'em.—My mother, you wot well
My hazards still have been your solace; and
Believe't not lightly—though I go alone,
Like to a lonely dragon, that his fen
Makes feared and talked of more than seen—your son
Will or exceed the common or be caught
With cautelous[2] baits and practice.
VOL. My first son,
Whither wilt thou go? Take good Cominius
With thee awhile: determine on some course,
More than a wild exposture to each chance
That starts i' th' way before thee.
COR. O the gods!
COM. I'll follow thee a month, devise with thee
Where thou shalt rest, that thou mayst hear of us,
And we of thee: so, if the time thrust forth
A cause for thy repeal, we shall not send
O'er the vast world to seek a single man,
And lose advantage, which doth ever cool
I' th' absence of the needer.
COR. Fare ye well:
Thou hast years upon thee; and thou art too full
Of the wars' surfeits, to go rove with one
That's yet unbruised: bring me but out at gate.
Come, my sweet wife, my dearest mother, and
My friends of noble touch, when I am forth,
Bid me farewell, and smile. I pray you, come.
While I remain above the ground, you shall
Hear from me still; and never of me aught
But what is like me formerly.

[2] cunning.

MEN. That's worthily
As any ear can hear.—Come, let's not weep.
If I could shake off but one seven years
From these old arms and legs, by the good gods,
I'd with thee every foot.
COR. Give me thy hand:
Come. [*They all pass through the gate.*

SCENE II

In a Street near the Gate we see SICINIUS, BRUTUS, *and an* ÆDILE.

SIC., *to the* ÆDILE. Bid them all home; he's gone, and we'll no further.
The nobility are vexed, whom we see have sided
In his behalf.
BRU. Now we have shown our power,
Let us seem humbler, after it is done,
Than when it was a-doing.
SIC. Bid them home;
Say their great enemy is gone, and they
Stand in their ancient strength.
BRU. Dismiss them home.
[*Exit* ÆDILE.

As BRUTUS *and* SICINIUS *turn to go out in the contrary direction,* VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, *and* MENENIUS *enter towards them.*

Here comes his mother.
SIC. <Let's not meet her.
BRU. Why?
SIC. They say she's mad.
BRU. They have ta'en note of us: keep on your way.>
VOL. O! you're well met. The hoarded plague o' th' gods
Requite your love!
MEN. <Peace, peace! be not so loud.>
VOL. If that I could for weeping, you should hear—
Nay, and you shall hear some. [*To* BRUTUS.] Will you be gone?
VIR., *to* SICINIUS. You shall stay too. I would I had the power
To say so to my husband.
SIC. Are you mánkind?
VOL. Ay, fool; is that a shame?—Note but this fool.—

Was not a man my father? Hadst thou foxship
To banish him that struck more blows for Rome
Than thou hast spoken words?
SIC. O blessëd heavens!
VOL. Moe[3] noble blows than ever thou wise words;
And for Rome's good. I'll tell thee what; yet go:
Nay, but thou shalt stay too: I would my son
Were in Arabia, and thy tribe before him,
His good sword in his hand.
SIC. What then?
VIR. What then!
He'd make an end of thy posterity.
VOL. Bastards and all.—
Good man, the wounds that he does bear for Rome!
MEN. Come, come: peace!
SIC. I would he had continued to his country
As he began, and not unknit himself
The noble knot he made.
BRU. I would he had.
VOL. "I would he had!" 'Twas you incensed the rabble:
Cats, that can judge as fitly of his worth
As I can of those mysteries which Heaven
Will not have earth to know.
BRU., *to* SICINIUS. Pray, let us go.
VOL. Now, pray, sir, get you gone:
You have done a brave deed. Ere you go, hear this:
As far as doth the Capitol exceed
The meanest house in Rome, so far my son—
This lady's husband here; this, do you see—
Whom you have banished, does exceed you all.
BRU. Well, well, we'll leave you.
SIC. Why stay we to be baited
With[4] one that wants her wits?
VOL. Take my prayers with you.
[Exeunt Tribunes.
I would the gods had nothing else to do
But to confirm my curses! Could I meet 'em
But once a day, it would unclog my heart
Of what lies heavy to't.
MEN. You have told them home,
And, by my troth, you have cause. You'll sup with me?
VOL. Anger's my meat; I sup upon myself;
And so shall starve with feeding.—[*To* VIRGILIA, *who is weeping.*] Come, let's go.
Leave this faint puling and lament as I do,
In anger, Juno-like. Come, come, come!
MEN. Fie, fie, fie! [*Exeunt.*

[3] more. [4] By.

SCENE III

A ROMAN *and a* VOLSCE *meet on the highway from Rome to Antium. The* ROMAN *is one who is not true to his country.*

ROM. I know you well, sir; and you know me: your name, I think, is Adrian.

VOLS. It is so, sir: truly, I have forgot you.

ROM. I am a Roman; and my services are, as you are, against 'em: know you me yet?

VOLS. Nicanor? No!

ROM. The same, sir.

VOLS. You had more beard, when I last saw you; but your favor is well approved by your tongue. What's the news in Rome? I have a note from the Volscian state to find you out there: you have well saved me a day's journey.

ROM. There hath been in Rome strange insurrections: the people against the senators, patricians, and nobles.

VOLS. Hath been! Is it ended then? Our state thinks not so; they are in a most warlike preparation, and hope to come upon them in the heat of their division.

ROM. The main blaze of it is past, but a small thing would make it flame again; for the nobles receive so to heart the banishment of that worthy Coriolanus, that they are in a ripe aptness to take all power from the people and to pluck from them their tribunes for ever. This lies

glowing, I can tell you, and is almost mature for the violent breaking out.

VOLS. Coriolanus banished!

ROM. Banished, sir.

VOLS. You will be welcome with this intelligence, Nicanor. [40

ROM. The day serves well for them now. I have heard it said, the fittest time to corrupt a man's wife is when she's fallen out with her husband. Your noble Tullus Aufidius will appear well in these wars, his great opposer, Coriolanus, being now in no request of his country.

VOLS. He cannot choose. I am most fortunate, thus accidentally to encounter you: you have ended my business, and I will merrily accompany you home. [51

ROM. I shall, between this and supper, tell you most strange things from Rome, all tending to the good of their adversaries. Have you an army ready, say you?

VOLS. A most royal one: the centurions and their charges distinctly billeted, already in the entertainment, and to be on foot at an hour's warning. [60

ROM. I am joyful to hear of their readiness, and am the man, I think, that shall set them in present action. So, sir, heartily well met, and most glad of your company.

VOLS. You take my part from me, sir; I have the most cause to be glad of yours.

ROM. Well, let us go together. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV

The banished CORIOLANUS *has betaken himself to Antium, to seek out his great opponent* AUFIDIUS, *with whose aid he hopes to obtain vengeance on his ungrateful country. He is before* AUFIDIUS' *house, in mean apparel, disguised and muffled.*

COR. A goodly city is this Antium.—City,
'Tis I that made thy widows: many an heir [11
Of these fair edifices fore my wars
Have I heard groan and drop: then, know me not,
Lest that thy wives with spits and boys with stones
In puny battle slay me.

Enter a CITIZEN.

Save you, sir.

CIT. And you. [20

COR. Direct me, if it be your will,
Where great Aufidius lies. Is he in Antium?

CIT. He is, and feasts the nobles of the state
At his house this night.

COR. Which is his house, beseech you?

CIT. This, here before you.

COR. Thank you, sir. Farewell. [*Exit* CITIZEN. [30
O world! thy slippery turns. Friends now fast sworn,
Whose double bosoms seem to wear one heart,
Whose hours, whose bed, whose meal, and exercise,
Are still together, who twin, as 'twere, in love
Unseparable, shall within this hour,
On a dissension of a doit,[5] break out [40
To bitterest enmity: so fellest foes,
Whose passions and whose plots have broke their sleep
To take the one the other, by some chance,
Some trick not worth an egg, shall grow dear friends
And interjoin their issues. So with me:
My birth-place hate I, and my love's upon [50
This enemy town. I'll enter: if he slay me,
He does fair justice; if he give me way,
I'll do his country service. [*Goes into the house, the door of which stands open.*

SCENE V

Inside the house, a SERVINGMAN *comes bustling into the hall from the banqueting-chamber which is just beyond, the music from which is clearly heard.*

1 SERV. Wine, wine, wine!—What serv-

[5] a coin of the smallest value.

ice is here! I think our fellows are asleep. [*Exit.*

A second SERVINGMAN *enters from the banqueting hall.* [9

2 SERV. Where's Cotus? my master calls for him. [*Calling.*] Cotus! [*Exit.*

Enter CORIOLANUS.

COR. A goodly house: the feast smells well; but I
Appear not like a guest.

Re-enter the FIRST SERVINGMAN.

1 SERV. What would you have, friend? Whence are you? Here's no place for you: pray, go to the door. [*Goes into the banqueting-chamber.* [20

COR. I have deserved no better entertainment,
In being Coriolanus.

Re-enter SECOND SERVINGMAN.

2 SERV. Whence are you, sir? Has the porter his eyes in his head, that he gives entrance to such companions? Pray, get you out.

COR. Away!

2 SERV. "Away!" Get *you* away. [30

COR. Now, th'art troublesome.

2 SERV. Are you so brave? I'll have you talked with anon.

Enter a THIRD SERVINGMAN. *Re-enter the* FIRST.

3 SERV. What fellow's this?

1 SERV. A strange one as ever I looked on: I cannot get him out o' th' house: prithee, call my master to him.

3 SERV. What have you to do here, fellow? Pray you, avoid the house. [41

COR. Let me but stand; I will not hurt your hearth.

3 SERV. What are you?

COR. A gentleman.

3 SERV. A marv'llous poor one.

COR. True, so I am.

3 SERV. Pray you, poor gentleman, take up some other station; here's no place for you; pray you, avoid: come. [50

COR. Follow your function; go, and batten on cold bits. [*Pushes him away.*

3 SERV. What, you will not? Prithee, tell my master what a strange guest he has here.

2 SERV. And I shall. [*Goes into the banqueting-chamber.*

3 SERV. Where dwell'st thou?

COR. Under the canopy.

3 SERV. "Under the canopy"? [60

COR. Ay.

3 SERV. Where's that?

COR. I' th' city of kites and crows.

3 SERV. "I' th' city of kites and crows!" What an ass it is! Then thou dwell'st with daws too?

COR. No; I serve not thy master.

3 SERV. How, sir! Do you meddle with my master?

COR. Ay; 'tis an honester service than to meddle with thy mistress. [71
Thou prat'st, and prat'st: serve with thy trencher. Hence. [*Beats him away.*

Enter AUFIDIUS *and* SECOND SERVINGMAN

AUF. Where is this fellow?

2 SERV. Here, sir: I'd have beaten him like a dog, but for disturbing the lords within.

AUF. Whence com'st thou? what wouldst thou? Thy name? [80
Why speak'st not? Speak, man: what's thy name?

COR., unmuffling. If, Tullus,
Not yet thou know'st me, and, seeing me, dost not
Think me for the man I am, necessity
Commands me name myself.

AUF. What is thy name?

[*The* THIRD SERVINGMAN *goes into the banqueting-hall; the other two retire into the background.* [91

COR. A name unmusical to the Volscians' ears,
And harsh in sound to thine.

AUF. Say, what's thy name?
Thou hast a grim appearance, and thy face
Bears a command in't; though thy tackle's torn,
Thou show'st a noble vessel. What's thy name? [101

COR. Prepare thy brow to frown. Know'st thou me yet?
AUF. I know thee not. Thy name?
COR. My name is Caius Marcius, who hath done
To thee particularly, and to all the Volsces,
Great hurt and mischief; thereto witness may
My surname, Coriolanus: the painful service,
The extreme dangers, and the drops of blood
Shed for my thankless country, are requited
But with that surname, a good memory,
And witness of the malice and displeasure
Which thou shouldst bear me: only that name remains;
The cruelty and envy of the people,
Permitted by our dastard nobles, who
Have all forsook me, hath devoured the rest,
And suffered me by th' voice of slaves to be
Whooped out of Rome. Now this extremity
Hath brought me to thy hearth; not out of hope,—
Mistake me not—to save my life; for, if
I had feared death, of all the men i' th' world
I would have voided thee; but in mere spite,
To be full quit of those my banishers,
Stand I before thee here. Then, if thou hast
A heart of wreak in thee, that will revenge
Thine own particular wrongs, and stop those maims
Of shame seen through thy country, speed thee straight,
And make my misery serve thy turn: so use it,
That my revengeful services may prove
As benefits to thee, for I will fight
Against my cankered country with the spleen
Of all the under fiends. But, if so be
Thou dar'st not this, and that to prove more fortunes
Thou art tired, then, in a word, I also am
Longer to live most weary, and present
My throat to thee and to thy ancient malice;
Which not to cut would show thee but a fool,
Since I have ever followed thee with hate,
Drawn tuns of blood out of thy country's breast,
And cannot live but to thy shame, unless
It be to do thee service.
AUF. O Marcius, Marcius!
Each word thou hast spoke hath weeded from my heart
A root of ancient envy. If Jupiter
Should from yond cloud speak divine things,
And say, "'Tis true," I'd not believe them more
Than thee, all-noble Marcius. Let me twine
Mine arms about that body, where-against
My grainèd ash a hundred times hath broke,
And scarred the moon with splinters: here I clip
The anvil of my sword, and do contest
As hotly and as nobly with thy love
As ever in ambitious strength I did
Contend against thy valor. Know thou first,
I loved the maid I married; never man
Sighed truer breath; but that I see thee here,
Thou noble thing! more dances my rapt heart
Than when I first my wedded mistress saw
Bestride my threshold. Why, thou Mars! I tell thee,
We have a power on foot; and I had purpose
Once more to hew thy target from thy brawn,
Or lose mine arm for't. Thou hast beat me out

Twelve several times, and I have nightly since
Dreamt of encounters 'twixt thyself and me;
We have been down together in my sleep,
Unbuckling helms, fisting each other's throat,
And waked half dead—with nothing. Worthy Marcius, [211
Had we no quarrel else to Rome, but that
Thou art thence banished, we would muster all
From twelve to seventy, and, pouring war
Into the bowels of ungrateful Rome,
Like a bold flood o'er-bear. O! come; go in,
And take our friendly senators by th' hands, [220
Who now are here, taking their leaves of me,
Who am prepared against your territories,
Though not for Rome itself.

COR. You bless me, gods!

AUF. Therefore, most absolute sir, if thou wilt have
The leading of thine own revenges, take
Th' one half of my commission, and set down, [231
As best thou art experienced, since thou know'st
Thy country's strength and weakness, thine own ways;
Whether to knock against the gates of Rome,
Or rudely visit them in parts remote,
To fright them, ere destroy. But come in: [240
Let me commend thee first to those that shall
Say yea to thy desires. A thousand welcomes!
And more a friend than e'er an enemy;
Yet, Marcius, that was much. Your hand: most welcome! [CORIOLANUS *and* AUFIDIUS *pass into the banqueting-hall.*

1 SERV., *advancing.* Here's a strange alteration! [251

2 SERV. By my hand, I had thought to have strucken him with a cudgel; and yet my mind gave me his clothes made a false report of him.

1 SERV. What an arm he has! He turned me about with his finger and his thumb, as one would set up a top.

2 SERV. Nay, I knew by his face that there was something in him: he had, [260 sir, a kind of face, methought—I cannot tell how to term it.

1 SERV. He had so; looking, as it were,—would I were hanged but I thought there was more in him than I could think.

2 SERV. So did I, I'll be sworn: he is simply the rarest man i' the world.

1 SERV. I think he is; but a greater soldier than he you wot on. [270

2 SERV. Who? my master?

1 SERV. Nay, it's no matter for that.

2 SERV. Worth six on him.

1 SERV. Nay, not so neither; but I take him to be the greater soldier.

2 SERV. Faith, look you, one cannot tell how to say that: for the defence of a town our general is excellent.

1 SERV. Ay, and for an assault too. [279

Re-enter THIRD SERVINGMAN.

3 SERV. O slaves! I can tell you news; news, you rascals!

1 AND 2 SERV. What, what, what? let's partake.

3 SERV. I would not be a Roman, of all nations; I had as lief be a condemned man.

1 AND 2 SERV. Wherefore? wherefore?

3 SERV. Why, here's he that was wont to thwack our general, Caius Marcius.

1 SERV. Why do you say "thwack [291 our general"?

3 SERV. I do not say, "thwack our general;" but he was always good enough for him.

2 SERV. Come, we are fellows and friends: he was ever too hard for him; I have heard him say so himself.

1 SERV. He was too hard for him, directly to say the truth on't: before [300 Corioli he scotched him and notched him like a carbonado.

2 SERV. An he had been cannibally

given, he might have broiled and eaten him too.

1 Serv. But, more of thy news.

3 Serv. Why, he is so made on here within, as if he were son and heir to Mars; set at upper end o' the table; no question asked him by any of the [310 senators, but they stand bald before him. Our general himself makes a mistress of him; sanctifies himself with's hand, and turns up the white o' the eye to his discourse. But the bottom of the news is, our general is cut i' the middle, and but one half of what he was yesterday, for the other has half, by the entreaty and grant of the whole table. He'll go, he says, and sowle[6] the porter of Rome [320 gates by the ears: he will mow down all before him, and leave his passage polled.[7]

2 Serv. And he's as like to do't as any man I can imagine.

3 Serv. "Do't!" he will do't; for—look you, sir—he has as many friends as enemies; which friends, sir—as it were—durst not—look you, sir—show themselves —as we term it—his friends, whilst he's in directitude. [330

1 Serv. "Directitude!" what's that?

2 Serv. But when they shall see, sir, his crest up again, and the man in blood, they will out of their burrows, like conies after rain, and revel all with him.

1 Serv. But when goes this forward?

3 Serv. To-morrow; to-day; presently. You shall have the drum struck up this afternoon; 'tis, as it were, a parcel of their feast, and to be executed ere they wipe their lips. [341

2 Serv. Why, then, we shall have a stirring world again. This peace is nothing but to rust iron, increase tailors, and breed ballad-makers.

1 Serv. Let me have war, say I; it exceeds peace as far as day does night; it's spritely, waking, audible, and full of vent. Peace is a very apoplexy, lethargy; mulled, deaf, sleepy, insensible; a [350 getter of more bastard children than war's a destroyer of men.

2 Serv. 'Tis so: and as wars, in some sort, may be said to be a ravisher, so it cannot be denied but peace is a great maker of cuckolds.

1 Serv. Ay, and it makes men hate one another.

3 Serv. Reason: because they then less need one another. The wars for [360 my money. I hope to see Romans as cheap as Volscians. They are rising, they are rising.

All. In, in, in, in! [*They hasten into the banqueting-chamber.*

Scene VI

Into a public place in Rome there enter Sicinius *and* Brutus.

Sic. We hear not of him, neither need we fear him;
His remedies are tame i' th' present peace
And quietness of the people, which before
Were in wild hurry. Here do we make his friends
Blush that the world goes well, who rather had, [11
Though they themselves did suffer by't, behold
Dissentious numbers pest'ring streets, than see
Our tradesmen singing in their shops and going
About their functions friendly.

Enter Menenius.

Bru. We stood to't in good time. Is this Menenius? [21
Sic. 'Tis he, 'tis he. O! he is grown most kind
Of late.—Hail, sir!
Men. Hail to you both!
Sic. Your Coriolanus is not much missed,
But with his friends: the commonwealth doth stand,
And so would do, were he more angry [30 at it.
Men. All's well; and might have been much better, if
He could have temporized.
Sic. Where is he, hear you?

[6] pull.
[7] bare.

MEN. Nay, I hear nothing; his mother and his wife
Hear nothing from him.

Enter three or four CITIZENS.

CITIZENS. The gods preserve you both!
SIC. Good den, our neighbors.
BRU. Good den to you all, good den to you all.
1 CIT. Ourselves, our wives and children, on our knees,
Are bound to pray for you both.
SIC. Live, and thrive!
BRU. Farewell, kind neighbors: we wished Coriolanus
Had loved you as we did.
CITIZENS. Now the gods keep you!
SIC. AND BRU. Farewell, farewell! [*Exeunt* CITIZENS.
SIC. This is a happier and more comely time
Than when these fellows ran about the streets
Crying confusion.
BRU. Caius Marcius was
A worthy officer i' th' war; but insolent,
O'ercome with pride, ambitious past all thinking,
Self-loving—
SIC. And affecting one sole throne,
Without assistance.
MEN. I think not so.
SIC. We should by this, to all our lamentation,
If he had gone forth consul, found it so.
BRU. The gods have well prevented it, and Rome
Sits safe and still without him.

Enter an ÆDILE.

ÆD. Worthy tribunes,
There is a slave, whom we have put in prison,
Reports, the Volsces with two several powers
Are entered in the Roman territories,
And, with the deepest malice of the war,
Destroy what lies before them.
MEN. 'Tis Aufidius,
Who, hearing of our Marcius' banishment,
Thrusts forth his horns again into the world;
Which were inshelled when Marcius stood for Rome,
And durst not once peep out.
SIC. Come, what talk you of Marcius?
BRU. Go see this rumorer whipped. It cannot be
The Volsces dare break with us.
MEN., *scornfully*. "Cannot be"!
We have recórd that very well it can,
And three examples of the like have been
Within my age. But reason with the fellow,
Before you punish him, where he heard this,
Lest you shall chance to whip your information,
And beat the messenger who bids beware
Of what is to be dreaded.
SIC. Tell not me:
I know this cannot be.
BRU. Not possible.

Enter a MESSENGER.

MESS. The nobles, in great earnestness, are going
All to the senate-house: some news is come
That turns their countenances.
SIC. 'Tis this slave.—
Go whip him fore the people's eyes: his raising;
Nothing but his report.
MESS. Yes, worthy sir,
The slave's report is seconded; and more,
More fearful, is delivered.
SIC. What more fearful?
MESS. It is spoke freely out of many mouths—
How probable I do not know—that Marcius,
Joined with Aufidius, leads a power 'gainst Rome,
And vows revenge as spacious as between
The young'st and oldest thing.
SIC., *scornfully*. This is most likely!
BRU. Raised only that the weaker sort may wish
Good Marcius home again.

SIC. The very trick on't.
MEN. This is unlikely:
He and Aufidius can no more atone,[8]
Than violentest contrariety.

Enter another MESSENGER. [139

2 MESS. You are sent for to the senate:
A fearful army, led by Caius Marcius,
Associated with Aufidius, rages
Upon our territories; and have already
O'erborne their way, consumed with fire, and took
What lay before them.

Enter COMINIUS.

COM. O! you have made good work!
MEN. What news? what news?
COM. You have holp to ravish your own daughters, and [151
To melt the city leads upon your pates,
To see your wives dishonored to your noses,—
MEN. What's the news? what's the news?
COM. Your temples burnëd in their cément, and
Your franchises, whereon you stood, confined [160
Into an auger's bore.
MEN. Pray now, your news?—
You have made fair work, I fear me.—Pray, your news?
If Marcius should be joined with Volscians—
COM. "If!"
He is their god: he leads them like a thing [169
Made by some other deity than Nature,
That shapes man better; and they follow him,
Against us brats, with no less confidence
Than boys pursuing summer butterflies,
Or butchers killing flies.
MEN. You have made good work,
You and your apron-men; you that stood so much
Upon the voice of occupation[9] and
The breath of garlic-eaters! [180
COM. He will shake
Your Rome about your ears.

MEN. As Hercules
Did shake down mellow fruit. You have made fair work!
BRU. But is this true, sir?
COM. Ay; and you'll look pale
Before you find it other. All the regions
Do smilingly revolt; and who resist
Are mocked for valiant ignorance, [190
And perish constant fools. Who is't can blame him?
Your enemies, and his, find something in him.
MEN. We are all undone unless
The noble man have mercy.
COM. Who shall ask it?
The tribunes cannot do't for shame; the people
Deserve such pity of him as the wolf [200
Does of the shepherds: for his best friends, if they
Should say, "Be good to Rome," they charged him even
As those should do that had deserved his hate,
And thérein showed like enemies.
MEN. 'Tis true:
If he were putting to my house the brand
That should consume it, I have not the face [211
To say, "Beseech you, cease."—You have made fair hands,
You and your crafts! you have crafted fair!
COM. You have brought
A trembling upon Rome, such as was never
S' incapable of help. [219
SIC. AND BRU. Say not we brought it.
MEN. How! Was it we? We loved him; but, like beasts
And cowardly nobles, gave way unto your clusters,
Who did hoot him out o' th' city.
COM. But I fear
They'll roar him in again. Tullus Aufidius,
The second name of men, obeys his points[10] [230
As if he were his officer: desperation
Is all the policy, strength, and defence,
That Rome can make against them.

[8] be reconciled.
[9] those who follow occupations.
[10] orders.

Enter a troop of CITIZENS.

MEN. Here come the clusters.
[*To* COMINIUS.] And is Aufidius with him? [*To* CITIZENS.] You are they
That made the air unwholesome, when you cast [240
Your stinking greasy caps in hooting at
Coriolanus' exile. Now he's coming;
And not a hair upon a soldier's head
Which will not prove a whip: as many coxcombs
As you threw caps up will he tumble down,
And pay you for your voices. 'Tis no matter;
If he could burn us all into one coal, [250
We have deserved it.

CITIZENS. Faith, we hear fearful news.

1 CIT. For mine own part,
When I said "banish him," I said 'twas pity.

2 CIT. And so did I.

3 CIT. And so did I; and, to say the truth, so did very many of us. That we did we did for the best; and, though we willingly consented to his banishment, yet it was against our will. [261

COM. Y'are goodly things, you voices!

MEN. You have made
Good work, you and your cry!—Shall's to the Capitol?

COM. O! ay; what else? [*Exeunt* COMINIUS *and* MENENIUS.

SIC. Go, masters, get you home; be not dismayed:
These are a side that would be glad to have [271
This true which they so seem to fear. Go home,
And show no sign of fear.

1 CIT. The gods be good to us! Come, masters, let's home. I ever said we were i' th' wrong when we banished him.

2 CIT. So did we all. But come, let's home. [*Exeunt* CITIZENS.

BRU. I do not like this news. [280

SIC. Nor I.

BRU. Let's to the Capitol. Would half my wealth
Would buy this for a lie!

SIC. Pray let us go. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE VII

The camp of AUFIDIUS *is now close to the walls of Rome. He is perturbed not a little by the readiness his troops have shown to prefer* CORIOLANUS *to him. He is discussing the matter with his* LIEUTENANT, *who thinks* AUFIDIUS *has been too generous to the newcomer.*

AUF. Do they still fly to th' Roman?

LIEU. I do not know what witchcraft's in him, but [10
Your soldiers use him as the grace fore meat,
Their talk at table, and their thanks at end;
And you are darkened in this action, sir,
Even by your own.

AUF. I cannot help it now,
Unless, by using means, I lame the foot
Of our design. He bears himself more proudlier, [20
Even to my person, than I thought he would
When first I did embrace him; yet his nature
In that's no changeling, and I must excuse
What cannot be amended.

LIEU. Yet, I wish, sir—
I mean for your particular—you had not
Joined in commission with him, but either have borne [31
The action of yourself, or else to him
Had left it solely.

AUF. I understand thee well; and be thou sure,
When he shall come to his account, he knows not
What I can urge against him. Although it seems, [39
And so he thinks, and is no less apparent
To th' vulgar eye, that he bears all things fairly,
And shows good husbandry for the Volscian state,
Fights dragon-like, and does achieve as soon

As draw his sword; yet he hath left undone
That which shall break his neck or hazard mine, [50
Whene'er we come to our account.
LIEU. Sir, I beseech you, think you he'll carry Rome?
AUF. All places yield to him ere he sits down;
And the nobility of Rome are his:
The senators and patricians love him too:
The tribunes are no soldiers; and their people [60
Will be as rash in the repeal as hasty
To expel him thence. I think he'll be to Rome
As is the osprey to the fish, who takes it
By sovereignty of nature. First he was
A noble servant to them, but he could not
Carry his honors even; whether 'twas pride, [69
Which, out of daily fortune, ever taints
The happy man; whether defect of judgment,
To fail in the disposing of those chances
Which he was lord of; or whether nature,
Not to be other than one thing, not moving
From th' casque to th' cushion, but commanding peace
Even with the same austerity and garb
As he controlled the war: but one of [80 these—
As he hath spices of them all, not all,
For I dare so far free him—made him feared,
So hated, and so banished; but he has a merit
To choke it in the utt'rance. So our virtues
Lie in th' interpretation of the time;
And power, unto itself most cómmendable, [91
Hath not a tomb so evident as a chair
T' extol what it hath done.
One fire drives out one fire; one nail, one nail;
Rights by rights falter,[11] strengths by strengths do fail.
Come, let's away!—When, Caius, Rome is thine,
Thou art poor'st of all; then shortly art thou mine. [*Exeunt.* [101

[11] B, fouler.

ACT FIVE

SCENE I

Rome is full of fear of CORIOLANUS. *His old chief,* COMINIUS, *has paid him a visit, to entreat mercy, and has met but a cold reception. Now he,* MENENIUS, *the Two Tribunes, and others are met in a public place in Rome.* BRUTUS *and* SICINIUS *have been endeavoring to persuade* MENENIUS *to supplement the attempt of* COMINIUS; *but* MENENIUS *is not eager to earn a snub.* [10

MEN. No, I'll not go: you hear what he hath said
Which was sometime his general; who loved him
In a most dear particular. He called me father;
But what o' that? Go, you that banished him;
A mile before his tent fall down, and knee [20
The way into his mercy. Nay, if he coyed[1]
To hear Cominius speak, I'll keep at home.
COM. He would not seem to know me.
MEN. Do you hear?
COM. Yet one time he did call me by my name.
I urged our old acquaintance, and the drops [30
That we have bled together. "Coriolanus"
He would not answer to; forbade all names;
He was a kind of nothing, titleless,
Till he had forged himself a name o' th' fire
Of burning Rome.
MEN. Why, so: you have made good work! [39
A pair of tribunes that have racked for Rome,
To make coals cheap: a noble memory!

[1] disdained.

COM. I minded him how royal 'twas to pardon
When it was less expected: he replied,
It was a bare petition of a state
To one whom they had punished.
MEN. Very well.
Could he say less? [49
COM. I offered to awaken his regard
For's private friends: his answer to me was,
He could not stay to pick them in a pile
Of noisome musty chaff: he said 'twas folly
For one poor grain or two to leave unburnt,
And still to nose th' offence.
MEN. For one poor grain or two!
I am one of those; his mother, wife, [60 his child,
And this brave fellow too, we are the grains:
You are the musty chaff, and you are smelt
Above the moon. We must be burnt for you.
SIC. Nay, pray, be patient: if you refuse your aid [69
In this so never-needed help, yet do not
Upbraid's with our distress. But, sure, if you
Would be your country's pleader, your good tongue,
More than the instant army we can make,
Might stop our countryman.
MEN. No; I'll not meddle.
SIC. Pray you, go to him.
MEN. What should I do? [80
BRU. Only make trial what your love can do
For Rome, towards Marcius.
MEN. Well; and say that Marcius
Return me, as Cominius is returned,
Unheard; what then?
But as a discontented friend, grief-shot
With his unkindness: say't be so?
SIC. Yet your good will
Must have that thanks from Rome, after the measure [91
As you intended well.
MEN. I'll undertake't:
I think he'll hear me. Yet, to bite his lip,
And hum at good Cominius, much unhearts me.
He was not taken well; he had not dined:
The veins unfilled, our blood is cold, and then [100
We pout upon the morning, are unapt
To give or to forgive; but, when we have stuffed
These pipes and these conveyances of our blood
With wine and feeding, we have suppler souls
Than in our priest-like fasts: therefore, I'll watch him
Till he be dieted to my request, [110
And then I'll set upon him.
BRU. You know the very road into his kindness,
And cannot lose your way.
MEN. Good faith, I'll prove him,
Speed how it will. I shall ere long have knowledge
Of my success. [*Exit.*
COM. He'll never hear him.
SIC. Not? [120
COM. I tell you he does sit in gold, his eye
Red as 'twould burn Rome, and his injury
The gaoler to his pity. I kneeled before him;
'Twas very faintly he said, "Rise;" dismissed me
Thus, with his speechless hand: what he would do [130
He sent in writing after me; what he would not,
Bound with an oath to yield to his conditions: [2]
So that all hope is vain
Unless his noble mother and his wife,
Who, as I hear, mean to solicit him
For mercy to his country. Therefore let's hence,
And with our fair entreaties haste them on. [*Exeunt.* [141

[2] this line is probably corrupt.

SCENE II

MENENIUS *pays his visit to the Volscian camp, for the purpose of seeing* CORIOLANUS. *He finds the* GUARDS *at their posts.*

1 GUARD. Stay! whence are you?
2 GUARD. Stand! and go back.
MEN. You guard like men; 'tis well; but, by your leave,
I am an officer of state, and come
To speak with Coriolanus. [10
1 GUARD. From whence?
MEN. From Rome.
1 GUARD. You may not pass; you must return: our general
Will no more hear from thence.
2 GUARD. You'll see your Rome embraced with fire before
You'll speak with Coriolanus.
MEN. Good my friends,
If you have heard your general talk of Rome, [21
And of his friends there, it is lots to blanks
My name hath touched your ears: it is Menenius.
1 GUARD. Be it so; go back; the virtue of your name
Is not here passable.
MEN. I tell thee, fellow,
Thy general is my lover: I have been [30
The book of his good acts, whence men have read
His fame unparalleled, haply amplified;
For I have ever glorified my friends—
Of whom he's chief—with all the size that verity
Would without lapsing suffer: nay, sometimes,
Like to a bowl upon a subtle ground,
I have tumbled past the throw, and in his praise [41
Have almost stamped the leasing. Therefore, fellow,
I must have leave to pass.
1 GUARD. Faith, sir, if you had told as many lies in his behalf as you have uttered words in your own, you should not pass here; no, though it were as virtuous to lie as to live chastely. Therefore, go back. [50
MEN. Prithee, fellow, remember my name is Menenius, always factionary on the party of your general.
2 GUARD. Howsoever you have been his liar—as you say you have—I am one that, telling true under him, must say you cannot pass. Therefore go back.
MEN. Has he dined, canst thou tell? for I would not speak with him till after dinner. [60
1 GUARD. You are a Roman, are you?
MEN. I am as thy general is.
1 GUARD. Then you should hate Rome, as he does. Can you, when you have pushed out your gates the very defender of them, and, in a violent popular ignorance, given your enemy your shield, think to front his revenges with the easy groans of old women, the virginal palms of your daughters, or with the palsied [70 intercession of such a decayed dotant as you seem to be? Can you think to blow out the intended fire your city is ready to flame in with such weak breath as this? No, you are deceived; therefore, back to Rome, and prepare for your execution; you are condemned, our general has sworn you out of reprieve and pardon. [79
MEN. Sirrah, if thy captain knew I were here, he would use me with estimation.
2 GUARD. Come, my captain knows you not.
MEN. I mean, thy general.
1 GUARD. My general cares not for you. Back, I say: go, lest I let forth your half-pint of blood; back, that's the utmost of your having: back.
MEN., *as he is being pushed out.* [90 Nay, but, fellow, fellow—

Enter CORIOLANUS *and* AUFIDIUS.

COR. What's the matter?
MEN. Now, you companion, I'll say an errand for you: you shall know now that I am in estimation; you shall perceive that a Jack guardant cannot office me from my son Coriolanus: guess, but by my entertainment with him, if thou [99 stand'st not i' the state of hanging, or

of some death more long in spectatorship, and crueller in suffering; behold now presently, and swound for what's to come upon thee. [*To* Coriolanus.] The glorious gods sit in hourly synod about thy particular prosperity, and love thee no worse than thy old father Menenius does! [*Weeping.*] O my son! my son! thou art preparing fire for us; look thee, here's water to quench it. I was hardly [110 moved to come to thee; but, being assured none but myself could move thee, I have been blown out of our[3] gates with sighs, and conjure thee to pardon Rome and thy petitionary countrymen. The good gods assuage thy wrath, and turn the dregs of it upon this varlet here; this, who, like a block, hath denied my access to thee.

Cor. Away! [120

Men. How! "away"!

Cor. Wife, mother, child, I know not. My affairs
Are servanted to others: though I owe
My revenge properly, my remission lies
In Volscian breasts. That we have been familiar,
Ingrate forgetfulness shall poison, rather
Than pity note how much. Therefore, be gone! [130
Mine ears against your suits are stronger than
Your gates against my force. Yet, for I loved thee,
Take this along; I writ it for thy sake,
[*Gives a paper*
And would have sent it. Another word, Menenius,
I will not hear thee speak.—This man, Aufidius, [140
Was my beloved in Rome: yet thou behold'st!

Auf. You keep a constant temper.

[*Exeunt* Coriolanus *and* Aufidius.

1 Guard. Now, sir, is your name Menenius?

2 Guard. 'Tis a spell, you see, of much power. You know the way home again.

1 Guard. Do you hear how we are shent[4] for keeping your greatness back?

[3] B, your.
[4] chidden.

2 Guard. What cause, do you think, [151 I have to swound?

Men. I neither care for th' world, nor your general; for such things as you, I can scarce think there's any, y'are so slight. He that hath a will to die by himself fears it not from another. Let your general do his worst. For you, be that you are, long; and your misery increase with your age! I say to you, as I was said to, Away! [*Exit.* [161

1 Guard. A noble fellow, I warrant him.

2 Guard. The worthy fellow is our general: he's the rock, the oak not to be wind-shaken. [*Exeunt.*

Scene III

Coriolanus *has* Aufidius *and others in his tent.*

Cor. We will before the walls of Rome to-morrow
Set down our host.—My partner in this action,
You must report to th' Volscian lords, how plainly
I have borne this business.

Auf. Only their ends [10
You have respected; stopped your ears against
The general suit of Rome; never admitted
A private whisper;—no, not with such friends
That thought them sure of you.

Cor. This last old man, [20
Whom with a cracked heart I have sent to Rome,
Loved me above the measure of a father;
Nay, godded me indeed. Their latest refuge
Was to send him, for whose old love I have,
Though I showed sourly to him, once more offered
The first conditions, which they did refuse, [29
And cannot now accept, to grace him only
That thought he could do more. A very little

I have yielded to; fresh embassies and suits,
Nor from the state nor private friends, hereafter
Will I lend ear to. [*Shout within.*] Ha! what shout is this?

Enter, in mourning habits, VIRGILIA, VOLUMNIA, *leading young* MARCIUS, [40 VALERIA, *and Attendants.*

<Shall I be tempted to infringe my vow
In the same time 'tis made? I will not.>
[*To* AUFIDIUS.] My wife comes foremost; then the honored mould
Wherein this trunk was framed, and in her hand
The grandchild to her blood. <But out, affection!
All bond and privilege of nature, break!
Let it be virtuous to be obstinate. [51
What is that curtsy worth? or those doves' eyes,
Which can make gods forsworn? I melt, and am not
Of stronger earth than others. My mother bows,
As if Olympus to a molehill should
In supplication nod; and my young boy
Hath an aspéct of intercession, which [60
Great nature cries, "Deny not." Let the Volsces
Plough Rome, and harrow Italy; I'll never
Be such a gosling to obey instínct, but stand
As if a man were author of himself
And knew no other kin.>

VIR. My lord and husband!

COR. These eyes are not the same I wore in Rome. [71

VIR. The sorrow that delivers us thus changed
Makes you think so.

COR. <Like a dull actor now,
I have forgot my part, and I am out,
Even to a full disgrace.> Best of my flesh,
Forgive my tyrannny; but do not say
For that, "Forgive our Romans." O! a kiss [81
Long as my exile, sweet as my revenge!
Now, by the jealous queen of heaven, that kiss
I carried from thee, dear, and my true lip
Hath virgined it e'er since.—You gods! I prate,
And the most noble mother of the world
Leave unsaluted.—Sink, my knee, i' th' earth; [*Kneels.* [91
Of thy deep duty more impression show
Than that of common sons.

VOL. O! stand up blest; [*He rises, and resumes his seat.*
Whilst, with no softer cushion than the flint,
I kneel before thee, and unproperly
Show duty, as mistaken all this while
Between the child and parent. [*Kneels.*

COR. What is this? [101
Your knees to me! to your corrected son!
Then let the pebbles on the hungry beach
Fillip the stars; then let the mutinous winds
Strike the proud cedars 'gainst the fiery sun,
Murd'ring impossibility, to make
What cannot be, slight work. [110

VOL., *rising.* Thou art my warrior;
I holp to frame thee. Do you know this lady?

COR. The noble sister of Publicola,
The moon of Rome; chaste as the icicle
That's curded by the frost from purest snow,
And hangs on Dian's temple: dear Valeria! [119

VOL. This is a poor epitome of yours, [*Pointing to the child.*
Which by the interpretation of full time
May show like all yourself.

COR. The god of soldiers,
With the consent of supreme Jove, inform
Thy thoughts with nobleness; that thou mayst prove
To shame unvulnerable, and stick i' th' wars [130
Like a great sea-mark, standing every flaw,[5]

[5] gust.

And saving those that eye thee!
VOL. Your knee, sirrah.
[*The boy kneels.* CORIOLANUS *lays a hand upon his head. The boy rises.*
COR. That's my brave boy!
VOL. Even he, your wife, this lady, and myself,
Are suitors to you. [140
COR. I beseech you, peace:
Or, if you'd ask, remember this before:
The things I have forsworn to grant may never
Be held by you denials. Do not bid me
Dismiss my soldiers, or capitulate[6]
Again with Rome's mechanics: tell me not
Wherein I seem unnatural: desire not
T'allay my rages and revenges with [150
Your colder reasons.
VOL. O! no more, no more;
You have said you will not grant us any thing;
For we have nothing else to ask but that
Which you deny already: yet we will ask;
That, if you fail in our request, the blame
May hang upon your hardness. Therefore, hear us. [160
COR. Aufidius, and you Volsces, mark; for we'll
Hear nought from Rome in private.—Your request?
VOL. Should we be silent and not speak, our raiment
And state of bodies would bewray what life
We have led since thy exile. Think with thyself [170
How more unfortunate than all living women
Are we come hither: since that thy sight, which should
Make our eyes flow with joy, hearts dance with comforts,
Constrains them weep and shake with fear and sorrow;
Making the mother, wife, and child to see [180
The son, the husband, and the father tearing
His country's bowels out. And to poor we
Thine enmity's most capital: thou barr'st us
Our prayers to the gods, which is a comfort
That all but we enjoy; for how can we,
Alas! how can we for our country pray,
Whereto we are bound, together with [191
thy victory,
Whereto we are bound? Alack! or we must lose
The country, our dear nurse, or else thy person,
Our comfort in the country. We must find
An evident calamity, though we had
Our wish, which side should win; for either thou [201
Must, as a foreign recreant, be led
With manacles through our streets, or else
Triumphantly tread on thy country's ruin,
And bear the palm, for having bravely shed
Thy wife and children's blood. For myself, son, [210
I purpose not to wait on Fortune till
These wars determine: if I cannot persuade thee
Rather to show a noble grace to both parts
Than seek the end of one, thou shalt no sooner
March to assault thy country than to tread— [219
Trust to't, thou shalt not—on thy mother's womb,
That brought thee to this world.
VIR. Ay, and mine,
That brought you forth this boy, to keep your name
Living to time.
BOY. 'A shall not tread on me:
I'll run away till I am bigger, but then I'll fight. [229
COR. Not of a woman's tenderness to be
Requires nor child nor woman's face to see.

[6] treat.

I have sat too long. [*Rises.*
VOL. Nay, go not from us thus.
If it were so, that our request did tend
To save the Romans, thereby to destroy
The Volsces whom you serve, you might condemn us, [239
As poisonous of your honor: no; our suit
Is, that you reconcile them: while the Volsces
May say, "This mercy we have showed;" the Romans,
"This we received;" and each in either side
Give the all-hail to thee, and cry, "Be blessed
For making up this peace!" Thou know'st, great son, [250
The end of war's uncertain; but this certain,
That, if thou conquer Rome, the benefit
Which thou shalt thereby reap is such a name
Whose repetition will be dogged with curses;
Whose chronicle thus writ: "The man was noble, [259
But with his last attempt he wiped it out,
Destroyed his country, and his name remains
To th' ensuing age abhorred." Speak to me, son!
Thou hast affected the fine strains of honor,
To imitate the graces of the gods;
To tear with thunder the wide cheeks o' th' air, [270
And yet to charge thy sulphur with a bolt
That should but rive an oak. Why dost not speak?
Think'st thou it honorable for a noble man
Still to remember wrongs?—Daughter, speak you:
He cares not for your weeping.—Speak thou, boy: [279
Perhaps thy childishness will move him more
Than can our reasons.—There is no man in the world
More bound to's mother; yet here he lets me prate
Like one i' th' stocks.—Thou hast never in thy life
Showed thy dear mother any courtesy;
When she—poor hen! fond of no second brood— [290
Has clucked thee to the wars, and safely home,
Loaden with honor. Say my request's unjust,
And spurn me back; but, if it be not so,
Thou art not honest, and the gods will plague thee,
That thou restrain'st from me the duty which [299
To a mother's part belongs.—He turns away:
Down, ladies; let us shame him with our knees. [*The three women and the boy kneel.*
To his surname Coriolanus longs more pride
Than pity to our prayers. Down: an end;
This is the last: so we will home to Rome,
And die among our neighbors. Nay, behold us. [311
This boy, that cannot tell what he would have,
But kneels and holds up hands for fellowship,
Does reason our petition with more strength
Than thou hast to deny't. Come, let us go: [*Rises, the others following her example.* [320
This fellow had a Volscian to his mother;
His wife is in Corioli, and his child
Like him by chance.—Yet give us our dispatch:
I am hushed until our city be a-fire,
And then I'll speak a little.
COR., *holding* VOLUMNIA *by the hand, silent.* O, mother, mother!
What have you done? Behold! the heavens do ope, [330
The gods look down, and this unnatural scene
They laugh at. O my mother! mother! O!

You have won a happy victory to Rome;
But, for your son—believe it, O! believe it—
Most dangerously you have with him prevailed,
If not most mortal to him. But let it come.—
Aufidius, though I cannot make true wars,
I'll frame convenient peace. Now, good Aufidius,
Were you in my stead, would you have heard
A mother less, or granted less, Aufidius?

AUF. I was moved withal.

COR. I dare be sworn you were;
And, sir, it is no little thing to make
Mine eyes to sweat compassion. But, good sir,
What peace you'll make, advise me: for my part,
I'll not to Rome, I'll back with you: and pray you,
Stand to me in this cause.—O mother! wife!

AUF. <I am glad thou hast set thy mercy and thy honor
At difference in thee: out of that I'll work
Myself a former fortune.> [*The ladies make signs to* CORIOLANUS.

COR. Ay, by and by;
But we will drink together; and you shall bear
A better witness back than words, which we,
On like conditions, would have counter-sealed.
Come, enter with us. Ladies, you deserve
To have a temple built you: all the swords
In Italy, and her confederate arms,
Could not have made this peace. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV

MENENIUS, *in view of his own failure with* CORIOLANUS, *is hopeless of the women's mission. He holds forth to* SICINIUS *in a public place in Rome.*

MEN. See you yond coign o' the Capitol, yond corner-stone?

SIC. Why, what of that?

MEN. If it be possible for you to displace it with your little finger, there is some hope the ladies of Rome, especially his mother, may prevail with him; but I say, there is no hope in't. Our throats are sentenced and stay upon execution.

SIC. Is't possible that so short a time can alter the condition of a man?

MEN. There is differency between a grub and a butterfly; yet your butterfly was a grub. This Marcius is grown from man to dragon: he has wings; he's more than a creeping thing.

SIC. He loved his mother dearly.

MEN. So did he me; and he no more remembers his mother now than an eight-year-old horse. The tartness of his face sours ripe grapes: when he walks, he moves like an engine, and the ground shrinks before his treading: he is able to pierce a corslet with his eye; talks like a knell, and his hum is a battery. He sits in his state, as a thing made for Alexander. What he bids be done is finished with his bidding. He wants nothing of a god but eternity and a heaven to throne in.

SIC. Yes, mercy, if you report him truly.

MEN. I paint him in the character. Mark what mercy his mother shall bring from him; there is no more mercy in him than there is milk in a male tiger; that shall our poor city find; and all this is long of you.

SIC. The gods be good unto us!

MEN. No, in such a case the gods will not be good unto us. When we banished him, we respected not them; and, he returning to break our necks, they respect not us.

Enter a MESSENGER.

MESS. Sir, if you'd save your life, fly to your house:
The plebeians have got your fellow-tribune,
And hale him up and down; all swearing, if
The Roman ladies bring not comfort home,

They'll give him death by inches.

Enter a second MESSENGER.

SIC. What's the news? [60

2 MESS. Good news, good news! the ladies have prevailed,
The Volscians are dislodged, and Marcius gone.
A merrier day did never yet greet Rome,
No, not th' expulsion of the Tarquins.

SIC. Friend,
Art thou certain this is true? is it most certain?

2 MESS. As certain as I know the sun is fire: [71
Where have you lurked that you make doubt of it?
Ne'er through an arch so hurried the blown tide,
As the recomforted through th' gates.
[*Trumpets and hautboys sounded, and drums beaten, all together. Shouting also within.*] Why, hark you!
The trumpets, sackbuts, psalteries, and fifes, [81
Tabors, and cymbals! and the shouting Romans
Make the sun dance. [*A shout within.*] Hark you!

MEN. This is good news:
I will go meet the ladies. This Volumnia
Is worth of consuls, senators, patricians,
A city full; of tribunes, such as you,
A sea and land full. You have prayed well to-day: [91
This morning for ten thousand of your throats
I'd not have given a doit. Hark how they joy! [*Music still, and shouts.*

SIC. First, the gods bless you for your tidings; next,
Accept my thankfulness.

2 MESS. Sir, we have all
Great cause to give great thanks. [100

SIC. They are near the city?

2 MESS. Almost at point to enter.

SIC. We will meet them,
And help the joy. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V

The Ladies make their entry into the city accompanied by Senators, Patricians, and People.

1 SEN. Behold our patroness, the life of Rome!—
Call all your tribes together, praise the gods,
And make triumphant fires; strew flowers before them: [9
Unshout the noise that banished Marcius;
Repeal him with the welcome of his mother;
Cry, "Welcome, ladies, welcome!"

ALL. Welcome, ladies,
Welcome! [*A flourish with drums and trumpets. Exeunt.*

SCENE VI

AUFIDIUS *is in a public place of Antium, with Attendants. He is determined to make* CORIOLANUS *suffer for his double treachery and to free himself from his rivalry.*

AUF. Go tell the lords o' th' city I am here:
Deliver them this paper: having read it,
Bid them repair to th' market-place; where I, [10
Even in theirs and in the commons' ears,
Will vouch the truth of it. Him I accuse
The city ports by this hath entered, and
Intends t'appear before the people, hoping
To purge himself with words: dispatch.
[*Exeunt Attendants.*

Enter three or four CONSPIRATORS *of* AUFIDIUS' *faction.*

Most welcome! [20

1 CON. How is it with our general?

AUF. Even so
As with a man by his own alms empoisoned,
And with his charity slain.

2 CON. Most noble sir,
If you do hold the same intent wherein
You wished us parties, we'll deliver you
Of your great danger.

AUF. Sir, I cannot tell: [30
We must proceed as we do find the people.

3 CON. The people will remain uncertain whilst

'Twixt you there's difference; but the fall of either
Makes the survivor heir of all.
AUF. I know it;
And my pretext to strike at him admits
A good construction. I raised him, and I pawned [41
Mine honor for his truth, who being so heightened,
He watered his new plants with dews of flattery,
Seducing so my friends; and, to this end,
He bowed his nature, never known before
But to be rough, unswayable, and free.
3 CON. Sir, his stoutness[7] [50
When he did stand for consul, which he lost
By lack of stooping—
AUF. That I would have spoke of:
Being banished for't, he came unto my hearth;
Presented to my knife his throat: I took him;
Made him joint-servant with me; gave him way [60
In all his own desires; nay, let him choose
Out of my files, his projects to accomplish,
My best and freshest men; served his designments
In mine own person; holp to reap the fame
Which he did end all his; and took some pride [69
To do myself this wrong, till, at the last,
I seemed his follower, not partner, and
He waged me with his countenance,[8] as if
I had been mercenary.
1 CON. So he did, my lord:
The army marvelled at it; and, in the last,
When we had carried Rome, and that we looked
For no less spoil than glory—
AUF. There was it [80
For which my sinews shall be stretched upon him.
At a few drops of women's rheum, which are
As cheap as lies, he sold the blood and labor
Of our great action: therefore shall he die,
And I'll renew me in his fall. [*Drums and trumpets sound, with great shouts of the people.*] But, hark! [91
1 CON. Your native town you entered like a post,
And had no welcomes home; but he returns,
Splitting the air with noise.
2 CON. And patient fools,
Whose children he hath slain, their base throats tear
With giving him glory. [100
3 CON. Therefore, at your vantage,
Ere he express himself, or move the people
With what he would say, let him feel your sword,
Which we will second. When he lies along,
After your way his tale pronounced shall bury
His reasons with his body. [110
AUF. Say no more:
Here come the lords.

Enter the LORDS *of the city.*

LORDS. You are most welcome home.
AUF. I have not deserved it.
But, worthy lords, have you with heed perused
What I have written to you?
LORDS. We have.
1 LORD. And grieve to hear't. [120
What faults he made before the last, I think
Might have found easy fines; but there to end
Where he was to begin, and give away
The benefit of our levies, answering us
With our own charge, making a treaty where
There was a yielding, this admits no excuse. [130
AUF. He approaches: you shall hear him.

Enter CORIOLANUS, *with drums and colors; a crowd of Citizens with him.*

[7] stubbornness.
[8] paid me with his patronage.

COR. Hail, lords! I am returned your soldiër;
No more infected with my country's love
Than when I parted hence, but still subsisting
Under your great command. You are to know
That prosperously I have attempted and
With bloody passage led your wars even to
The gates of Rome. Our spoils we have brought home
Do more than counterpoise a full third part
The charges of the action. We have made peace
With no less honor to the Antiates
Than shame to th' Romans; and we here deliver,
Subscribed by th' consuls and patriciäns,
Together with the seal o' th' senate, what
We have compounded on.
AUF. Read it not, noble lords;
But tell the traitor in the highest degree
He hath abused your powers.
COR. "Traitor"! How now?
AUF. Ay, traitor, Marcius.
COR. "Marcius"!
AUF. Ay, Marcius, Caius Marcius. Dost thou think
I'll grace thee with that robbery, thy stol'n name
Coriolanus, in Corioli?
You lords and heads o' th' state, perfidiously
He has betrayed your business, and given up,
For certain drops of salt, your city Rome,
I say "your city," to his wife and mother;
Breaking his oath and resolution like
A twist of rotten silk, never admitting
Counsel o' th' war, but at his nurse's tears
He whined and roared away your victory,
That pages blushed at him, and men of heart
Looked wond'ring each at other.
COR. Hear'st thou, Mars?
AUF. Name not the god, thou boy of tears.
COR. Ha!
AUF. No more.
COR. Measureless liar, thou hast made my heart
Too great for what contains it. "Boy"! O slave!
Pardon me, lords, 'tis the first time that ever
I was forced to scold. Your judgments, my grave lords,
Must give this cur the lie: and his own notion—
Who wears my stripes impressed upon him, that
Must bear my beating to his grave—shall join
To thrust the lie unto him.
1 LORD. Peace, both, and hear me speak.
COR. Cut me to pieces, Volsces; men and lads,
Stain all your edges on me. "Boy"! False hound!
If you have writ your annals true, 'tis there,
That, like an eagle in a dove-cote, I
Fluttered your Volscians in Corioli:
Alone I did it. "Boy"!
AUF. Why, noble lords,
Will you be put in mind of his blind fortune,
Which was your shame, by this unholy braggart,
Fore your own eyes and eärs?
CONSPIRATORS. Let him die for't.
ALL THE PEOPLE. Tear him to pieces.—Do it presently.—He killed my son.—My daughter.—He killed my cousin Marcus.—He killed my father.
2 LORD. Peace, ho! no outrage: peace! The man is noble and his fame folds in
This orb o' th' earth. His last offences to us
Shall have judicious hearing. Stand, Aufidius,
And trouble not the peace.
COR. O! that I had him,
With six Aufidiuses, or more, his tribe,
To use my lawful sword!

AUF. Insolent villain!
CONSPIRATORS. Kill, kill, kill, kill, kill him! [AUFIDIUS *and the* CONSPIRATORS *draw, and kill* CORIOLANUS, *who falls;* AUFIDIUS *stands on his body.* [241
LORDS. Hold, hold, hold, hold!
AUF. My noble masters, hear me speak.
1 LORD. O Tullus!
2 LORD. Thou hast done a deed whereat valor will weep.
3 LORD. Tread not upon him.—Masters all, be quiet;
Put up your swords!
AUF. My lords, when you shall know—as in this rage, [251
Provoked by him, you cannot—the great danger
Which this man's life did owe you, you'll rejoice
That he is thus cut off. Please it your honors
To call me to your senate, I'll deliver
Myself your loyal servant or endure
Your heaviest censure. [260
1 LORD. Bear from hence his body;
And mourn you for him! Let him be regarded
As the most noble corse that ever herald
Did follow to his urn.
2 LORD. His own impatience
Takes from Aufidius a great part of blame.
Let's make the best of it.
AUF. My rage is gone; [270
And I am struck with sorrow. Take him up:
Help, three o' th' chiefest soldiers; I'll be one.
Beat thou the drum, that it speak mournfully;
Trail your steel pikes. Though in this city he
Hath widowed and unchilded many a one,
Which to this hour bewail the injury,
Yet he shall have a noble memory. [281
Assist. [*Exeunt, bearing the body of* CORIOLANUS. *A dead march sounded.*

BARTHOLOMEW FAIR

BY

BENJAMIN JONSON

INTRODUCTION

Of all the pictures of the life of the period that have come down to us, by far the most vivid and the most striking is Jonson's "Bartholomew Fair." It is excessively coarse, but vibrates with life, with humor, and with something of the quality of that abominable modern invention, "the pictures." It begins somewhat slowly, but before the close of the first act we become aware of the extreme cleverness the author is displaying in devising means for getting his various characters to the Fair, though most of them are very unlikely visitants. Once we are at the Fair, the fun becomes fast and furious, though the "vapors" in IV are overdone and the "motion" in V might also have been abbreviated. The dialect too in which two or three of the minor characters speak becomes wearisome in reading, though it would probably pass unnoticed in a stage presentation. But these are only small flaws in what is perhaps the finest farce in the language—if it is to be considered as farce. But is it? The characters are the most real Jonson has created, and the incidents develop naturally from the characters. The play should, then, be considered rather as boisterous comedy than as farce. Even so regarded, it is still incomparable.

But, as is to be expected with Jonson, the humor is of a satirical twist throughout. The chief objects of his satire are the Puritans, as exemplified in the preacher Zeal-of-the-Land Busy and the magistrate Adam Overdo. The Puritan outlook and Puritan casuistry are delightfully hit off in Busy's speeches in I and by the excuses he gives in III for satisfying his craving for roast pig. The vices that he abhors do not include gluttony. Even after he has had his fill, we have him eagerly seizing on what he takes to be a reference to pig to say, "There is no more, is there?" and earlier we have had Littlewit describing him as "fast by the teeth i' the cold turkey pie i' the cupboard, with a great white loaf on his left hand and a glass of malmsey on his right." Brother Busy evidently believed in doing himself well. All this only adds to the comic effect of the fury of his zeal when he overthrows the gingerbread stall and when he gets into argumentative "holts" with the ventriloquial master of the puppets, to his own utter discomfiture. Perhaps less rich in merriment than Busy, but more appealing to our sense of the ironic, is Justice Overdo, a thoroughly well-meaning fool, who seeks to play the part of Harun-al-Raschid, but contrives to misin-

terpret almost everything that comes under his notice, especially the character of the cutpurse Edgworth. It may be a bit hard to imagine even such a fool as he giving a blank warrant, as he does in V; but the rest of his conduct, absurd as it is, is precisely what might be expected from him. Waspe and Cokes are most amusing characters, drawn with amazing vigor, and put before us with extraordinary fidelity; and the feather-headed Littlewit adds another to this rich gallery of well-observed individuals. The women are less real; but the Puritanical Dame Purecraft and the bestial Ursula stand out clearly, and there is plenty of humor in the drawing of both Win-the-Fight Littlewit and Alice Overdo. No more amusing female character than the greasy Ursula is to be found in our literature.

The humor of incident and action is as great as the humor of characterization. The sight of the laden Numps must have brought roars of laughter to the audience; the perpetual punishing of the innocent Justice is excessively mirth-provoking; the constant coming and going of the afflicted Troubleall must also be very amusing on the stage; and the overthrow of Busy by the argumentative puppet is delightfully effective. One of the cleverest pieces of craftsmanship in the play is Overdo's partial recognition by his wife and Cokes in II, the author thus disarming the captious critic who might be ready to complain that the prating justice could not have passed unrecognized by those who were well acquainted with him.

This most high-spirited of all Jonson's plays, the most brilliantly colored drama of the Elizabethan period, a document as veracious as amusing, was first produced by the Princess Elizabeth's men at the Hope on the last day of October, 1614. It is not contained in the folio of 1616, but is in the second folio, issued after Jonson's death. The date of 1631 attached to it seems to imply that it was intended to form part of a supplementary volume of his works which Jonson was intending to get together, for the same date is attached to two other late plays that had not appeared in the first folio. Jonson wrote an apology for "Bartholomew Fair;" but this has unfortunately perished.

CHARACTERS

STAGE-KEEPER, BOOKHOLDER, SCRIVENER *in the Induction.*

JOHN LITTLEWIT, *a Proctor.*

ZEAL-OF-THE-LAND BUSY, *suitor to Dame Purecraft, a Banbury man.*[1]

WINWIFE, *his rival, a Gentleman.*

TOM QUARLOUS, *companion to Winwife, a Gamester.*

BARTHOLOMEW COKES, *an Esquire of Harrow.*

HUMPHREY WASPE, *his man.*

ADAM OVERDO, *a Justice of Peace.*

LANTHORN LEATHERHEAD, *a Hobby-horse Seller.*[2]

SOLOMON, *Littlewit's man.*

EZECHIEL EDGWORTH, *a Cutpurse.*

NIGHTINGALE, *a Ballad-singer.*

MOONCALF, *Tapster to Ursula.*

DAN JORDAN KNOCKHUM, *a horse-courser and a ranger of Turnbull.*[3]

VAL. CUTTING, *a Roarer.*[4]

[1] a Puritan. [2] a seller of toys.
[3] Turnbull or Turnmill Street, a notorious haunt of prostitutes.
[4] a bully.

CAPTAIN WHIT, *a Bawd.*

TROUBLEALL, *a Madman.*

BRISTLE, HAGGISE *Watchmen.*

POCHER, *a Beadle.*

FILCHER, SHARKWELL *Door-keepers to the Pup-pet-show.*

NORDERN, *a Clothier (a Northern Man).*

PUPPY, *a Wrestler (a Western man).*

A TINDERBOXMAN, *vendor of mousetraps.*

A COSTARDMONGER.

A CORNCUTTER.

WIN-THE-FIGHT LITTLEWIT, *wife to John.*

DAME PURECRAFT, *her Mother, a Widow.*

ALICE OVERDO, *the Justice's Wife.*

GRACE WELLBORN, *ward to Justice Overdo.*

JOAN TRASH, *a Gingerbread-woman.*

URSULA, *a Pig-woman.*

ALICE, *mistress of the game.*

Officers of the Watch, Porters, Boys, and Visitors to the Fair.

PLACE: *London.*

TIME: *Jonson's Own Day.*

BARTHOLOMEW FAIR

PROLOGUE

To the King's Majesty.

Your Majesty is welcome to a Fair;
Such place, such men, such language, and such ware
You must expect: with these, the zealous noise
Of your land's faction, scandalized at toys,
As babies, hobby-horses, puppet-plays,
And such-like, rage, whereof the petulant ways
Yourself have known, and have been vexed with long.
These for your sport, without particular wrong,
Or just complain of any private man
Who of himself or shall think well or can,
The maker doth present, and hopes to-night
To give you for a fairing true delight.

INDUCTION

The Stage.

Enter the STAGE-KEEPER.

STAGE. Gentlemen, have a little patience, they are e'en upon coming instantly. He that should begin the play, Master Littlewit, the proctor, has a stitch new fallen in his black silk stocking; 'twill be drawn up ere you can tell twenty: he plays one o' the Arches that dwells about the hospital, and he has a very pretty part. But for the whole play, will you have the truth on't?—I am looking, lest the poet hear me, or his man, Master Broome,[1] behind the arras—it is like to be a very conceited scurvy one, in plain English. When't comes to the Fair once, you were e'en as good go to Virginia, for anything there is of Smithfield. He has not hit the humors, he does not know them; he has not conversed with the Bartholomew birds, as they say; he has ne'er a sword and buckler-man in his Fair; nor a little Davy, to take toll o' the bawds there, as in my time; nor a Kindheart, if anybody's teeth should chance to ache, in his play; nor a juggler with a well-educated ape, to come over the chain for a King of England, and back again for the Prince, and sit still on his arse for the Pope and the King of Spain. None of these fine sights! Nor has he the canvas cut in the night, for a hobby-horse-man to creep into his she-neighbor; and take his leap there. Nothing! No: an some writer that I know had had but the penning o' this matter, he would have made you such a jig-a-jog in the booths, you should have thought an earthquake had been in the Fair! But these master-poets, they will have their own absurd courses; they will be informed of nothing. He has (sir reverence) kicked me three or four times about the tiring-house, I thank him, for but offering to put in with my experience. I'll be judged by you, gentlemen, now, but for one conceit of mine: would not a fine pump upon the stage have done well for a property now? and a punk set under upon her head, with her stern upward, and have

[1] The author's amanuensis.

been soused by my witty young masters o' the Inns of Court? What think you of this for a show, now? he will not hear o' this! I am an ass! I! and yet I kept the stage in Master Tarleton's time, I thank my stars. Ho! an that man had lived to have played in "Bartholomew Fair," you should have seen him have come in, and have been cozened in the cloth-quarter so finely! and [60 Adams, the rogue, have leaped and capered upon him, and dealt his vermin about, as though they had cost him nothing! and then a substantial watch to have stolen in upon them, and taken them away, with mistaking words, as the fashion is in the stage-practice.

Enter the Bookholder[2] *with a* Scrivener. [69

Book. How now! what rare discourse are you fallen upon, ha? have you found any familiars here, that you are so free? what's the business?

Stage. Nothing, but the understanding gentlemen o' the ground[3] here asked my judgment.

Book. Your judgment, rascal! for what? sweeping the stage, or gathering up the broken apples for the bears [79 within? Away, rogue, it's come to a fine degree in these spectacles, when such a youth as you pretend to a judgment. [*Exit* Stage-keeper.] And yet he may, in the most of this matter, i' faith: for the author has writ it just to his meridian, and the scale of the grounded judgments here, his play-fellows in wit.—Gentlemen—[*comes forward*] not for want of a prologue, but by way of a new one, [89 I am sent out to you here, with a scrivener, and certain articles drawn out in haste between our author and you; which if you please to hear, and, as they appear reasonable, to approve of, the play will follow presently. Read, scribe; gi' me the counterpane.

Scriv. "Articles of agreement, indented, between the spectators or hearers at the Hope on the Bankside in the county of Surrey on the one party; [100 and the author of 'Bartholomew Fair,' in the said place and county, on the other party: the one and thirtieth day of October, 1614, and in the twelfth year of the reign of our sovereign lord, James, by the grace of God, King of England, France, and Ireland, defender of the faith; and of Scotland the seven and fortieth. [109

"*Imprimis*. It is covenanted and agreed, by and between the parties abovesaid, and the said spectators and hearers, as well the curious and envious as the favoring and judicious, as also the grounded judgments and understandings, do for themselves severally covenant and agree to remain in the places their money or friends have put them in, with patience, for the space of two hours and a half, [119 and somewhat more. In which time the author promiseth to present them, by us, with a new sufficient play, called 'Bartholomew Fair,' merry, and as full of noise as sport: made to delight all, and to offend none; provided they have either the wit or the honesty to think well of themselves.

"It is further agreed, that every person here have his or their free-will of [129 censure, to like or dislike at their own charge, the author having now departed with his right: it shall be lawful for any man to judge his six pen'orth, his twelve pen'orth, so to his eighteen-pence, two shillings, half a crown, to the value of his place; provided always his place get not above his wit. And if he pay for half a dozen, he may censure for all them too, so that he will undertake that they shall be silent. He shall put in for cen- [140 sures here, as they do for lots at the lottery; marry, if he drop but sixpence at the door and will censure a crown's-worth, it is thought there is no conscience or justice in that.

"It is also agreed, that every man here exercise his own judgment, and not censure by contagion, or upon trust, from another's voice or face, that sits by him, be he never so first in the commission [150

[2] the prompter.
[3] the pit.

of wit; as also, that he be fixed and settled in his censure, that what he approves or not approves to-day he will do the same to-morrow; and, if to-morrow, the next day; and so the next week, if need be; and not to be brought about by any that sits on the bench with him, though they indite and arraign plays daily. He that will swear 'Jeronimo' or 'Andronicus' are the best plays yet shall pass [160 unexcepted at here, as a man whose judgment shows it is constant and hath stood still these five-and-twenty or thirty years. Though it be an ignorance, it is a virtuous and staid ignorance; and, next to truth, a confirmed error does well; such a one the author knows where to find him.

"It is further covenanted, concluded, and agreed, that how great soever the expectation be, no person here is to ex- [170 pect more than he knows, or better ware than a fair will afford; neither to look back to the sword and buckler age of Smithfield, but content himself with the present. Instead of a little Davy, to take toll o' the bawds, the author doth promise a strutting horse-courser, with a leere drunkard, two or three to attend him, in as good equipage as you would [179 wish; and then, for Kindheart, the tooth-drawer, a fine oily pig-woman, with her tapster, to bid you welcome, and a consort of roarers, for music; a wise justice of peace meditant, instead of a juggler with an ape; a civil cutpurse searchant; a sweet singer of new ballads allurant; and as fresh an hypocrite as ever was broached, rampant. If there be never a servant monster in the fair, who can [189 help it, he says? nor a nest of antiques: he is loth to make nature afraid in his plays, like those that beget tales, tempests, and such like drolleries, to mix his head with other men's heels. Let the concupiscence of jigs and dances reign as strong as it will amongst you; yet if the puppets will please anybody they shall be intreated to come in. [198

"In consideration of which, it is finally agreed, by the foresaid hearers and spectators, That they neither in themselves conceal, nor suffer by them to be concealed, any state-decypherer, or politic picklock of the scene, so solemnly ridiculous as to search out who was meant by the gingerbread-woman, who by the hobby-horse man, who by the costardmonger, nay, who by their wares; or that will pretend to affirm on his own inspired ignorance, what Mirror of Magistrates [210 is meant by the justice, what great lady by the pig-woman, what concealed statesman by the seller of mouse-traps, and so of the rest; but that such person, or persons, so found, be left discovered to the mercy of the author, as a forfeiture to the stage, and your laughter aforesaid. As also such as shall so desperately, or ambitiously, play the fool by his place [219 aforesaid, to challenge the author of scurrility, because the language somewhere savors of Smithfield, the booth, and the pigbroth, or of profaneness, because a madman cries, 'God quit you,' or 'bless you'! In witness whereof, as you have preposterously put to your seals already, which is your money, you will now add the other part of suffrage, your hands. The play shall presently begin. And, [229 though the Fair be not kept in the same region that some here perhaps would have it, yet think that therein the author hath observed a special decorum, the place being as dirty as Smithfield, and as stinking every whit.

"Howsoever, he prays you to believe his ware is still the same, else you will make him justly suspect that he that is so loth to look on a baby or an hobby-horse here, would be glad to take [240 up a commodity of them, at any laughter or loss, in another place." [*Exeunt.*

ACT ONE

LITTLEWIT, *a gentleman who prides himself upon his ability to play upon words, is alone in a room in his house in Smithfield.*

LIT. A pretty conceit, and worth the finding! I ha' such luck to spin out these fine things still, and, like a silk-

worm, out of myself. Here's Master Bartholomew Cokes, of Harrow o' the [9 Hill, i' th' county of Middlesex, esquire, takes forth his license to marry Mistress Grace Wellborn, of the said place and county: and when does he take it forth? to-day! the four-and-twentieth of August! Bartholomew-day! Bartholomew upon Bartholomew! there's the device! who would have marked such a leap-frog chance now? A very [little] less than amesace, on two dice! Well, go thy ways, John Littlewit, proctor John Littlewit: one of the pretty wits o' Paul's, the Littlewit of London, so thou art [22 called, and something beside. When a quirk or a quiblin does scape thee, and thou dost not watch and apprehend it, and bring it afore the constable of conceit (there now, I speak quib too), let 'em carry thee out o' th' archdeacon's court into his kitchen, and make a Jack of thee, instead of a John. There I am again, la!— [31

Enter Mrs. Littlewit, *who is anticipating motherhood.*

Win, good morrow, Win; ay, marry, Win, now you look finely indeed, Win! this cap does convince. You'd not ha' worn it, Win, nor ha' had it velvet, but a rough country beaver, with a copper band, like the coney-skin woman of Budge-row. [39 Sweet Win, let me kiss it. And her fine high shoes, like the Spanish lady! Good Win, go a little; I would fain see thee pace, pretty Win; by this fine cap, I could never leave kissing on't.

Mrs. Lit. Come indeed, la, you are such a fool still!

Lit. No, but half a one, Win; you are the t'other half: man and wife make one fool, Win. Good! Is there the proctor, or doctor indeed, i' the diocese, that ever had the fortune to win him such a Win? There I am again! I do feel [52 conceits coming upon me, more than I am able to turn tongue to. A pox o' these pretenders to wit! your Three Cranes, Mitre, and Mermaid-men! not a corn of true salt, nor a grain of right mustard, amongst them all. They may stand for places, or so again the next wit-fall, and pay two-pence in a quart more for their canary than other men. But gi' me the man can start up a justice of wit out of [62 six shillings beer, and give the law to all the poets and poet-suckers i' town; because they are the players' gossips. 'Slid! other men have wives as fine as the players, and as well dressed. Come hither, Win. [*Kisses her.*

Enter Winwife.

Winw. Why, how now, Master Littlewit! measuring of lips, or moulding of kisses? which is it? [72

Lit. Troth, I am a little taken with my Win's dressing here: does't not fine, Master Winwife? How do you apprehend, sir? she would not have worn this habit. I challenge all Cheapside to show such another: Moorfields, Pimlico-path, or the Exchange, in a summer evening, with a lace to boot, as this has. Dear [80 Win, let Master Winwife kiss you. He comes a-wooing to our mother, Win, and may be our father perhaps, Win. There's no harm in him, Win.

Winw. None i' the earth, Master Littlewit. [*Kisses her.*

Lit. I envy no man my delicates, sir.

Winw. Alas, you have the garden where they grow still—a wife here with a strawberry breath, cherry-lips, apricot cheeks, and a soft velvet head, like a melicotton! [92

Lit. Good, i' faith! now dulness upon me, that I had not that before him, that I should not light on't as well as he! velvet head!

Winw. But my taste, Master Littlewit, tends to fruit of a later kind—the sober matron, your wife's mother. [99

Lit. Ay, we know you are a suitor, sir; Win and I both wish you well. By this license here, would you had her, that your two names were as fast in it as here are a couple! Win would fain have a fine young father i' law, with a feather; that her mother might hood it and chain it with Mistress Overdo. But you do

not take the right course, Master Winwife.

WINW. No, Master Littlewit? why? [110

LIT. You are not mad enough.

WINW. How! is madness a right course?

LIT. I say nothing, but I wink upon Win. You have a friend, one Master Quarlous, comes here sometimes.

WINW. Why, he makes no love to her, does he?

LIT. Not a tokenworth that ever I saw, I assure you; but— [120

WINW. What?

LIT. He is the more mad-cap of the two. You do not apprehend me.

MRS. LIT. You have a hot coal i' your mouth now, you cannot hold.

LIT. Let me out with it, dear Win.

MRS. LIT. I'll tell him myself.

LIT. Do, and take all the thanks; and much good do thy pretty heart, Win! [129

MRS. LIT. Sir, my mother has had her nativity-water cast lately by the cunning-men in Cow-lane, and they ha' told her her fortune, and do ensure her, she shall never have happy hour, unless she marry within this se'nnight; and, when it is, it must be a madman, they say.

LIT. Ay, but it must be a gentleman madman.

MRS. LIT. Yes, so the t'other man of Moorfields says. [140

WINW. But does she believe 'em?

LIT. Yes, and has been at Bedlam twice since every day, to inquire if any gentleman be there or to come there mad.

WINW. Why, this is a confederacy, a mere piece of practice upon her by these impostors.

LIT. I tell her so; or else, say I that they mean some young madcap gentleman (for the devil can equivocate as [150 well as a shopkeeper); and therefore would I advise you to be a little madder than Master Quarlous hereafter.

WINW. Where is she? stirring yet?

LIT. Stirring! yes, and studying an old elder come from Banbury, a suitor that puts in here at meal tide, to praise the painful brethren, or pray that the sweet singers may be restored; says a [159 grace as long as his breath lasts him. Sometime the spirit is so strong with him, it gets quite out of him; and then my mother, or Win, are fain to fetch it again with malmsey or aqua cœlestis.

MRS. LIT. Yes, indeed, we have such a tedious life with him for his diet, and his clothes too! he breaks his buttons, and cracks seams at every saying he sobs out.

LIT. He cannot abide my vocation, he says. [170

MRS. LIT. No; he told my mother a proctor was a claw of the beast, and that she had little less than committed abomination in marrying me so as she has done.

LIT. Every line, he says, that a proctor writes, when it comes to be read in the bishop's court, is a long black hair kembed out of the tail of Antichrist.

WINW. When came this proselyte?

LIT. Some three days since. [180

Enter QUARLOUS.

QUAR. O, sir, ha' you ta'en soil here? It's well a man may reach you after three hours' running yet! What an unmerciful companion art thou, to quit thy lodging at such ungentlemanly hours! none but a scattered covey of fiddlers, or one of these rag-rakers in dunghills, or some marrow-bone man at most, would have been up when thou wert gone abroad, [190 by all description. I pray thee what ailest thou, thou canst not sleep? hast thou thorns i' thy eyelids, or thistles i' thy bed?

WINW. I cannot tell: it seems you had neither i' your feet, that took this pain to find me.

QUAR. No, an I had, all the lime hounds o' the city should have drawn after you by the scent rather.—Mas- [200 ter John Littlewit! God save you, sir! [*While he converses with* LITTLEWIT, WIN *and* WINWIFE *talk apart.*] 'Twas a hot night with some of us, last night, John. Shall we pluck a hair of the same wolf to-day,[1] Proctor John?

LIT. Do you remember, Master Quar-

[1] a proverbial phrase for getting intoxicated again.

lous, what we discoursed on last night?

QUAR. Not I, John, nothing that I either discourse or do; at those times I forfeit all to forgetfulness. [211

LIT. No! not concerning Win? look you, there she is, and dressed, as I told you she should be: hark you, sir, [*whispers to him*] had you forgot?

QUAR. By this head I'll beware how I keep you company, John, when I drink, an you have this dangerous memory: that's certain.

LIT.[2] Why, sir? [220

QUAR. Why! we were all a little stained last night, sprinkled with a cup or two, and I agreed with Proctor John here, to come and do somewhat with Win (I know not what 'twas) to-day; and he puts me in mind on't now; he says he was coming to fetch me. Before truth, if you have that fearful quality, John, to remember when you are sober, John, what you promise drunk, John, I shall [230 take heed of you, John. For this once I am content to wink at you. Where's your wife? come hither, Win. [*Kisses her.*

MRS. LIT. Why, John! do you see this, John? look you! help me, John.

LIT. O Win, fie, what do you mean, Win? be womanly, Win; make an outcry to your mother, Win! Master Quarlous is an honest gentleman, and our wor- [239 shipful good friend, Win; and he is Master Winwife's friend too; and Master Winwife comes a suitor to your mother, Win, as I told you before, Win, and may perhaps be our father, Win: they'll do you no harm, Win; they are both our worshipful good friends. Master Quarlous! you must know Master Quarlous, Win; you must not quarrel with Master Quarlous, Win. [249

QUAR. No, we'll kiss again, and fall in.[3] [*Kisses her again.*

LIT. Yes, do, good Win.

MRS. LIT. I' faith, you are a fool, John.

LIT. A fool-John, she calls me; do you mark that, gentlemen? pretty Littlewit of velvet! a fool-John.

QUAR. <She may call you an apple-John,[4] if you use this.>

[*Kisses her again.*

WINW. Pray thee forbear, for my respect, somewhat. [261

QUAR. Hoy-day! how respective you are become o' the sudden! I fear this family will turn you reformed too; pray you come about again. Because she is in possibility to be your daughter-in-law, and may ask you blessing hereafter, when she courts it to Totnam,[5] to eat cream! Well, I will forbear, sir; but, i' faith, [269 would thou wouldst leave thy exercise of widow-hunting once; this drawing after an old reverend smock by the splay-foot! There cannot be an ancient tripe or trillibub in the town, but thou art straight nosing it, and 'tis a fine occupation thou'lt confine thyself to when thou hast got one; scrubbing a piece of buff, as if thou hadst the perpetuity of Pannier-alley to stink in; or perhaps worse, currying a carcass that thou hast bound thyself [280 to alive. I'll be sworn, some of them that thou art or hast been a suitor to are so old as no chaste or married pleasure can ever become 'em; the honest instrument of procreation has forty years since left to belong to them; thou must visit them as thou wouldst do a tomb, with a torch or three handfuls of link, flaming hot, and so thou mayst hap to make them feel thee, and after come to inherit ac- [290 cording to thy inches. A sweet course for a man to waste the brand of life for, to be still raking himself a fortune in the old woman's embers! We shall ha' thee, after thou hast been but a month married to one of them, look like the quartan ague and the black jaundice met in a face, and walk as if thou hadst borrowed legs of a spinner and voice of a cricket. I would endure to hear fifteen sermons [300 a week for her, and such coarse and loud ones as some of them must be! I would e'en desire of fate I might dwell in a drum and take in my sustenance with an old broken tobacco-pipe and a straw. Dost thou ever think to bring thine ears

[2] Should not this speech be Winwife's?
[3] be reconciled.
[4] a procurer.
[5] Tottenham.

or stomach to the patience of a dry grace as long as thy table-cloth; and droned out by thy son here (that might be thy father), till all the meat on thy board has forgot it was that day in the kitchen? or to brook the noise made in a [312 question of predestination by the good laborers and painful eaters assembled together, put to them by the matron your spouse who moderates with a cup of wine ever and anon, and a sentence out of Knox between? or the perpetual spitting before and after a sober-drawn exhortation of six hours, whose better part was the hum-ha-hum? or to hear prayers [321 groaned out over thy iron chests, as if they were charms to break them? And all this, for the hope of two apostle-spoons, to suffer! and a cup to eat a caudle in! for that will be thy legacy. She'll ha' conveyed her state safe enough from thee, an she be a right widow.

WINW. Alas, I am quite off that scent now. [330

QUAR. How so?

WINW. Put off by a brother of Banbury, one that, they say, is come here, and governs all already.

QUAR. What do you call him? I knew divers of those Banburians when I was in Oxford.

WINW. Master Littlewit can tell us.

LIT. Sir!—Good Win, go in, and if Master Bartholomew Cokes his man come for the license (the litle old fellow), [341 let him speak with me. [*Exit* MRS. LITTLEWIT.] What say you, gentlemen?

WINW. What call you the reverend elder you told me of, your Banbury man?

LIT. Rabbi Busy, sir; he is more than an elder: he is a prophet, sir.

QUAR. O, I know him! a baker, is he not? [349

LIT. He was a baker, sir, but he does dream now and see visions; he has given over his trade.

QUAR. I remember that too; out of a scruple he took that, in spiced conscience, those cakes he made were served to bridals, maypoles, morrices, and such profane feasts and meetings. His Christian name is Zeal-of-the-land.

LIT. Yes, sir; Zeal-of-the-land Busy.

WINW. How! what a name's there! [360

LIT. O, they have all such names, sir; he was witness for Win here—they will not be called godfathers—and named her Win-the-fight; you thought her name had been Winifred, did you not?

WINW. I did indeed.

LIT. He would ha' thought himself a stark reprobate if it had.

QUAR. Ay, for there was a blue-starch woman of the name at the same time. [370 A notable hypocritical vermin it is. I know him: one that stands upon his face more than his faith at all times; ever in seditious motion and reproving for vainglory; of a most lunatic conscience and spleen, and affects the violence of singularity in all he does. He has undone a grocer here in Newgate-market that broke with him, trusted him with currants; as arrant a zeal as he (that's by [380 the way). By his profession he will ever be in the state of innocence though, and childhood; derides all antiquity, defies any other learning than inspiration; and what discretion soever years should afford him, it is all prevented in his original ignorance: ha' not to do with him, for he is a fellow of a most arrogant and invincible dulness, I assure you.—Who is this? [390

Re-enter MRS. LITTLEWIT *with* WASPE, *a man of a most choleric and quarrelsome disposition.*

WASPE. By your leave, gentlemen, with all my heart to you; and God you good morrow!—Master Littlewit, my business is to you: is this license ready?

LIT. Here, I ha' it for you in my hand, Master Humphrey. [399

WASPE. That's well; nay, never open or read it to me, it's labor in vain, you know. I am no clerk; I scorn to be saved by my book, i' faith; I'll hang first; fold it up o' your word, and gi' it me. What must you ha' for it?

LIT. We'll talk of that anon, Master Humphrey.

WASPE. Now, or not at all, good Master Proctor; I am for no anons, I assure you. [410

LIT. Sweet Win, bid Solomon send me the little black box within in my study.

WASPE. Ay, quickly, good mistress, I pray you; for I ha' both eggs o' the spit, and iron i' the fire. [*Exit* MRS. LITTLEWIT.] Say what you must have, good Master Littlewit.

LIT. Why, you know the price, Master Numps.

WASPE. I know! I know nothing, [420 I: what tell you me of knowing? Now I am in haste, sir, I do not know, and I will not know, and I scorn to know; and yet, now I think on't, I will, and do know as well as another; you must have a mark for your thing here, and eightpence for the box; I could ha' saved twopence i' that, an I had bought it myself; but here's fourteen shillings for you. [*Gives* LITTLEWIT *money*.] Good Lord, how long your little wife stays! pray God, [431 Solomon, your clerk, be not looking i' the wrong box, Master Proctor.

LIT. Good i' faith! no, I warrant you, Solomon is wiser than so, sir.

WASPE. Fie, fie, fie, by your leave, Master Littlewit, this is scurvy, idle, foolish, and abominable, with all my heart; I do not like it. [*Walks aside*. [439

WINW. <Do you hear, Jack Littlewit! what business does thy pretty head think this fellow may have, that he keeps such a coil with?

QUAR. More than buying of gingerbread in the cloister here, for that we allow him, or a gilt pouch in the Fair?

LIT. Master Quarlous, do not mistake him; he is his master's both-hands, I assure you.

QUAR. What! to pull on his boots [450 a-mornings, or his stockings, does he?

LIT. Sir, if you have a mind to mock him, mock him softly, and look t'other way: for if he apprehend you flout him once, he will fly at you presently. A terrible testy old fellow, and his name is Waspe too!

QUAR. Pretty insect! make much on him.> [459

WASPE. A plague o' this box, and the pox too, and on him that made it, and her that went for't, and all that should have sought it, sent it, or brought it! do you see, sir.

LIT. Nay, good Master Waspe.

WASPE. Good Master Hornet, turd in your teeth, hold you your tongue: do not I know you? your father was a 'pothecary, and sold glysters, more than he gave, I wusse. And turd in your little wife's teeth too—here she comes— [471

Re-enter MRS. LITTLEWIT *with the box.*

'twill make her spit, as fine as she is, for all her velvet custard on her head, sir.

LIT. O, be civil, Master Numps.

WASPE. Why, say I have a humor not to be civil; how then? who shall compel me? you?

LIT. Here is the box now. [479

WASPE. Why, a pox o' your box, once again! let your little wife stale in it, an she will. Sir, I would have you to understand, and these gentlemen too, if they please—

WINW. With all our hearts, sir.

WASPE. That I have a charge, gentlemen.

LIT. They do apprehend, sir. [488

WASPE. Pardon me, sir, neither they nor you can apprehend me yet. You are an ass. I have a young master, he is now upon his making and marring; the whole care of his well-doing is now mine. His foolish schoolmasters have done nothing but run up and down the country with him to beg puddings and cake-bread of his tenants, and almost spoiled him; he has learned nothing but to sing catches and repeat, "Rattle, bladder, rattle!" and "O Madge!" I dare not let [500 him walk alone for fear of learning of vile tunes, which he will sing at supper and in the sermon-times! If he meet but a carman i' the street, and I find him not talk to keep him off on him, he will

whistle him and all his tunes over at night in his sleep. He has a head full of bees. I am fain now, for this little time I am absent, to leave him in charge with a gentlewoman: 'tis true, she is a [510 justice of peace his wife, and a gentlewoman of the hood, and his natural sister; but what may happen under a woman's government, there's the doubt. Gentlemen, you do not know him; he is another manner of piece than you think for: but nineteen years old, and yet he is taller than either of you by the head, God bless him! [519

Quar. <Well, methinks this is a fine fellow.

Winw. He has made his master a finer by this description, I should think.

Quar. 'Faith, much about one, it is cross and pile, whether for a new farthing.>

Waspe. I'll tell you, gentlemen—

Lit. Will't please you drink, Master Waspe? [529

Waspe. Why, I ha' not talked so long to be dry, sir. You see no dust or cobwebs come out o' my mouth, do you? you'd ha' me gone, would you?

Lit. No, but you were in haste e'en now, Master Numps.

Waspe. What an I were? so I am still, and yet I will stay too; meddle you with your match, your Win there; she has as little wit as her husband, it seems: I have others to talk to. [540

Lit. She's my match indeed, and as *little wit* as I; good!

Waspe. We ha' been but a day and a half in town, gentlemen, 'tis true; and yesterday in the afternoon we walked London, to show the city to the gentlewoman he shall marry, Mistress Grace; but, afore I will endure such another half day with him, I'll be drawn with [549 a good gib-cat through the great pond at home, as his uncle Hodge was. Why, we could not meet that heathen thing all day but stayed him: he would name you all the signs over, as he went, aloud; and, where he spied a parrot or a monkey, there he was pitched, with all the little long coats about him, male and female; no getting him away! I thought he would ha' run mad o' the black boy in Bucklersbury that takes the scurvy [560 roguy tobacco there.

Lit. You say true, Master Numps; there's such a one indeed.

Waspe. It's no matter whether there be or no; what's that to you?

Quar. <He will not allow of John's reading at any hand.>

Enter Cokes, Mistress Overdo, *and* Grace. Cokes *is a young country gentleman who is bent on seeing Bartholomew Fair.* [571

Cokes. O, Numps! are you here, Numps? look where I am, Numps, and Mistress Grace too! Nay, do not look angerly, Numps: my sister is here and all; I do not come without her.

Waspe. What the mischief do you come with her? or she with you?

Cokes. We came all to seek you, Numps. [580

Waspe. To seek me! why, did you all think I was lost, or run away with your fourteen shillings' worth of small ware here? or that I had changed it in the Fair for hobby-horses? 'Sprecious! to seek me!

Mrs. Over. Nay, good Master Numps, do you show discretion, though he be exorbitant, as Master Overdo says, and 't be but for conservation o' the peace. [590

Waspe. Marry gip, goody she-justice, Mistress French hood! turd in your teeth, and turd in your French hood's teeth too, to do you service, do you see! Must you quote your Adam to me! you think you are Madam Regent still, Mistress Overdo, when I am in place. No such matter, I assure you; your reign is out, when I am in, dame. [599

Mrs. Over. I am content to be in abeyance, sir, and be governed by you; so should he too, if he did well; but 'twill be expected you should also govern your passions.

Waspe. Will it so, forsooth! good Lord, how sharp you are, with being at Bed-

lam yesterday! Whetstone has set an edge upon you, has he?

Mrs. Over. Nay, if you know not what belongs to your dignity, I do yet to mine.

Waspe. Very well then. [611

Cokes. Is this the license, Numps? for love's sake let me see't; I never saw a license.

Waspe. Did you not so? why, you shall not see't then.

Cokes. An you love me, good Numps.

Waspe. Sir, I love you, and yet I do not love you in these fooleries: set your heart at rest, there's nothing in't but [620 hard words; and what would you see't for?

Cokes. I would see the length and the breadth on't, that's all; and I will see't now, so I will.

Waspe. You sha' not see it here.

Cokes. Then I'll see it at home, and I'll look upo' the case here. [628

Waspe. Why, do so.—A man must give way to him a little in trifles, gentlemen. These are errors, diseases of youth; which he will mend when he comes to judgment and knowledge of matters. I pray you conceive so, and I thank you; and I pray you pardon him, and I thank you again.

Quar. <Well, this dry nurse, I say still, is a delicate man.

Mrs. Lit. And I am for the cosset[6] his charge: did you ever see a fellow's face more accuse him for an ass? [641

Quar. Accuse him! it confesses him one without accusing. What pity 'tis yonder wench should marry such a Cokes!

Winw. 'Tis true.

Quar. She seems to be discreet, and as sober as she is handsome.

Winw. Ay, and, if you mark her, what a restrained scorn she casts upon all his behavior and speeches!> [650

Cokes. Well, Numps, I am now for another piece of business more—the Fair, Numps; and then—

Waspe. Bless me! deliver me! help, hold me! the Fair!

Cokes. Nay, never fidge up and down, Numps, and vex itself. I am resolute Bartholomew in this; I'll make no suit on't to you; 'twas all the end of my journey indeed, to show Mistress Grace my Fair. I call't my Fair, because of [661 Bartholomew: you know, my name is Bartholomew, and Bartholomew Fair.

Lit. That was mine afore, gentlemen; this morning. I had that, i' faith, upon his license; believe me, there he comes after me.

Quar. Come, John, this ambitious wit of yours, I am afraid, will do you no good in the end. [670

Lit. No! why, sir?

Quar. You grow so insolent with it, and overdoing, John, that if you look not to it, and tie it up, it will bring you to some obscure place in time, and there 'twill leave you.

Winw. Do not trust it too much, John, be more sparing, and use it but now and then; a wit is a dangerous thing in this age; do not over-buy it. [680

Lit. Think you so, gentlemen? I'll take heed on't hereafter.

Mrs. Lit. Yes, do, John.

Cokes. A pretty little soul, this same Mistress Littlewit, would I might marry her!

Grace. <So would I; or anybody else, so I might scape you.>

Cokes. Numps, I will see it, Numps, 'tis decreed: never be melancholy for the matter. [691

Waspe. Why, see it, sir, see it, do see it: who hinders you? why do you not go see it? 'slid, see it!

Cokes. The Fair, Numps, the Fair!

Waspe. Would the Fair and all the drums and rattles in it were i' your belly for me! they are already i' your brain. He that had the means to travel your head now, should meet finer sights [700 than any are in the Fair, and make a finer voyage on't; to see it all hung with cockleshells, pebbles, fine wheat straws, and here and there a chicken's feather, and a cobweb.

Quar. <Good faith, he looks, methinks, an' you mark him, like one that were

[6] a hand-reared lamb.

made to catch flies, with his Sir Cranion-legs.[7]

WINW. And his Numps, to flap 'em [710 away.>

WASPE. God be wi' you, sir! there's your bee in a box, and much good do't you! [*Gives* COKES *the box.*

COKES. Why, your friend, and Bartholomew, an you be so contumacious.

QUAR.. What mean you, Numps? [*He and* WINWIFE *take* WASPE *aside as he is going out.* [719

WASPE. I'll not be guilty, I, gentlemen.

MRS. OVER. You will not let him go, brother, and lose him?

COKES. Who can hold that will away? I had rather lose him than the Fair, I wusse.

WASPE. <You do not know the inconvenience, gentlemen, you persuade to, nor what trouble I have with him in these humors. If he go to the Fair, he will buy of everything to a baby there; and household stuff for that too. If a leg or an [731 arm on him did not grow on, he would lose it in the press. Pray heaven I bring him off with one stone! And then he is such a ravener after fruit!—you will not believe what a coil I had t'other day to compound a business between a Katerne-pear[8] woman and him, about snatching: 'tis intolerable, gentlemen.

WINW. O, but you must not leave him now to these hazards, Numps. [741

WASPE. Nay, he knows too well I will not leave him, and that makes him presume.>—Well, sir, will you go now? if you have such an itch in your feet, to foot it to the Fair, why do you stop? am I your tarriers? go, will you go, sir? why do you not go?

COKES. O, Numps, have I brought you about? come, Mistress Grace, and sister, I am resolute Bat,[9] i' faith, still. [751

GRA. Truly, I have no such fancy to the Fair, nor ambition to see it; there's none goes thither of any quality or fashion.

COKES. O Lord, sir! you shall pardon me, Mistress Grace, we are enow of ourselves to make it a fashion; and, for qualities, let Numps alone: he'll find qualities. [*Exeunt* MISTRESS OVERDO, GRACE, COKES *and* WASPE. [760

QUAR. <What a rogue in apprehension is this, to understand her language no better!

WINW. Ay, and offer to marry her! Well, I will leave the chase of my widow for to-day, and directly to the Fair. These flies cannot, this hot season, but engender us excellent creeping sport.

QUAR. A man that has but a spoonful of brain would think so.>—Farewell, [770 John. [*Exeunt* QUARLOUS *and* WINWIFE.

LIT. Win, you see 'tis in fashion to go to the Fair, Win; we must to the Fair too, you and I, Win. I have an affair in the Fair, Win, a puppet-play of mine own making (say nothing), that I writ for the motion-man, which you must see, Win.

MRS. LIT. I would I might, John; but my mother will never consent to such a profane motion, she will call it. [780

LIT. Tut! we'll have a device, a dainty one.—Now, Wit, help at a pinch, good Wit, come, come, good Wit, an't be thy will!—I have it, Win; I have it, i' faith, and 'tis a fine one. Win, long to eat of a pig, sweet Win, in the Fair, do you see, in the heart o' the Fair, not at Pye-corner. Your mother will do anything, Win, to satisfy your longing, you know; pray thee long presently; and be sick o' the sudden, good Win. I'll go in and tell her; cut thy lace in the meantime, and [792 play the hypocrite, sweet Win.

MRS. LIT. No, I'll not make me unready for it. I can be hypocrite enough, though I were never so straight-laced.

LIT. You say true, you have been bred in the family, and brought up to't. Our mother is a most elect hypocrite, and has maintained us all this seven year with it, like gentlefolks. [801

MRS. LIT. Ay, let her alone, John, she is not a wise wilful widow for nothing; nor a sanctified sister for a song. And let me alone too, I ha' somewhat o' the mother in me, you shall see; fetch her,

[7] Spider-like or fly-like legs.
[8] Catherine-pear.
[9] a contraction for Bartholomew.

fetch her—[*Exit* LITTLEWIT.] Ah! ah! [*Seems to swoon.*

Hearing her scream, LITTLEWIT *and* [809 DAME PURECRAFT *rush in. Short as is the time since* LITTLEWIT *left the stage, he has already acquainted the dame with the nature of his wife's longing.*

PURE. Now the blaze of the beauteous discipline fright away this evil from our house!—How now, Win-the-fight, child? how do you? sweet child, speak to me.

MRS. LIT., *pretending to recover.* Yes, forsooth. [819

PURE. Look up, sweet Win-the-fight, and suffer not the enemy to enter you at this door. Remember that your education has been with the purest. What polluted one was it that named first the unclean beast, pig, to you, child?

MRS. LIT. Uh, uh!

LIT. Not I, o' my sincerity, mother; she longed above three hours ere she would let me know it.—Who was it, Win?

MRS. LIT. A profane black thing with a beard, John. [831

PURE. O, resist it, Win-the-fight: it is the tempter, the wicked tempter; you may know it by the fleshly motion of pig. Be strong against it and its foul temptations in these assaults, whereby it broacheth flesh and blood, as it were on the weaker side; and pray against its carnal provocations; good child, sweet child, pray. [840

LIT. Good mother, I pray you that she may eat some pig, and her belly-full too; and do not you cast away your own child, and perhaps one of mine, with your tale of the tempter. How do you do, Win, are you not sick?

MRS. LIT. Yes, a great deal, John: uh, uh!

PURE. What shall we do? Call our zealous brother Busy hither, for his faithful fortification in this charge of the adversary. [*Exit* LITTLEWIT.] Child, [852 my dear child, you shall eat pig; be comforted, my sweet child.

MRS. LIT. Ay, but i' the Fair, mother.

PURE. I mean i' the Fair, if it can be any way made or found lawful.

Re-enter LITTLEWIT.

Where is our brother Busy? will he not come?—Look up, child. [860

LIT. Presently, mother, as soon as he has cleansed his beard. I found him fast by the teeth i' the cold turkey-pie i' the cupboard, with a great white loaf on his left hand, and a glass of malmsey on his right.

PURE. Slander not the brethren, wicked one.

LIT. Here he is now, purified, mother.

Enter ZEAL-OF-THE-LAND BUSY, [870 *who, being fond of eating, will discover all sorts of excellent reasons why, in spite of Puritan disapproval of the Fair, it will be no harm to go there to eat pig.*

PURE. O, brother Busy! your help here, to edify and raise us up in a scruple: my daughter Win-the-fight is visited with a natural disease of women, called a longing to eat pig.

LIT. Ay, sir, a Bartholomew pig; and in the Fair. [881

PURE. And I would be satisfied from you, religiously wise, whether a widow of the sanctified assembly, or a widow's daughter, may commit the act without offence to the weaker sisters.

BUSY. Verily, for the disease of longing, it is a disease, a carnal disease or appetite, incident to women; and, as it is carnal and incident, it is natural, very natural. Now pig, it is a meat, and a [891 meat that is nourishing and may be longed for, and so consequently eaten; it may be eaten; very exceeding well eaten; but in the Fair, and as a Bartholomew pig, it cannot be eaten; for the very calling it a Bartholomew pig, and to eat it so, is a spice of idolatry, and you make the Fair no better than one of the high places. This, I take it, is the state of the question: a high place. [901

LIT. Ay, but in state of necessity, place should give place, Master Busy. (I have a conceit left yet.)

Pure. Good brother Zeal-of-the-land, think to make it as lawful as you can.

Lit. Yes, sir, and as soon as you can; for it must be, sir: you see the danger my little wife is in, sir. [909

Pure. Truly, I do love my child dearly, and I would not have her miscarry, or hazard her first-fruits, if it might be otherwise.

Bus. Surely, it may be otherwise, but it is subject to construction—subject, and hath a face of offence with the weak, a great face, a foul face; but that face may have a veil put over it, and be shadowed, as it were: it may be eaten, and in the Fair, I take it, in a booth, the [920 tents of the wicked: the place is not much, not very much; we may be religious in the midst of the profane, so it be eaten with a reformed mouth, with sobriety and humbleness; not gorged in with gluttony or greediness, there's the fear: for, should she go there, as taking pride in the place, or delight in the unclean dressing, to feed the vanity of the eye or lust of the palate, it were not well, it were not fit, it were abominable, and not good. [932

Lit. Nay, I knew that afore, and told her on't; but courage, Win, we'll be humble enough: we'll seek out the homeliest booth i' the Fair, that's certain; rather than fail, we'll eat it o' the ground.

Pure. Ay, and I'll go with you myself, Win-the-fight, and my brother Zeal-of-the-land shall go with us too, for our better consolation. [941

Mrs. Lit. Uh, uh!

Lit. Ay, and Solomon too, Win; the more the merrier.—<Win, we'll leave Rabbi Busy in a booth.>—Solomon! my cloak!

Enter Solomon *with the cloak.*

Sol. Here, sir.

Bus. In the way of comfort to the [949 weak, I will go and eat. I will eat exceedingly, and prophesy; there may be a good use made of it too, now I think on't: by the public eating of swine's flesh, to profess our hate and loathing of Judaism, whereof the brethren stand taxed. I will therefore eat; yea, I will eat exceedingly.

Lit. Good, i'faith, I will eat heartily too, because I will be no Jew; I could never away with that stiff-necked generation; and truly, I hope my little one will be like me, that cries for pig so i' the [962 mother's belly.

Bus. Very likely, exceeding likely, very exceeding likely.

ACT TWO

The heart of the Fair, the same day. Before us are the booths and stalls, the barrows and baskets, of vendors of divers wares. Leatherhead[1] *has an assortment of toys;* Joan Trash *sells gingerbread; and these and others are seated beside their goods. A prominent booth is that of* Ursula, *the inside of which is open to our view.* Ursula, *who is not yet visible, is a sort of female Falstaff,* [10 *of gigantic proportions, and with the same humorous recognition of her bulk. She is a vendor of liquor and roast pig, and makes money out of the use of an inner room for illegitimate purposes.*

Justice Overdo *stands apart from the booths. He has resolved to play the part of the great Muslim khalif who is the hero of so many of the stories of "The Thousand and One Nights," by visit-* [20 *ing the Fair in disguise, in order to see for himself what iniquities are being committed there; but, fortunately for the fun of the play, he is a first-class fool, who may be trusted to misinterpret most of what he hears and sees.*

Over. <Well, in justice' name, and the king's, and for the commonwealth! defy all the world, Adam Overdo, for a dis- [29 guise, and all story; for thou hast fitted thyself, I swear. Fain would I meet the Linceus now, that eagle's eye, that piercing Epidaurian serpent (as my Quintus Horace calls him), that could discover a justice of peace (and lately of the Quorum) under this covering. They may

[1] Leatherhead seems to be a caricature of Inigo Jones, as is seen more clearly where he is master of the puppets, in V.

have seen many a fool in the habit of a justice; but never till now, a justice in the habit of a fool. Thus must we do [39 though, that wake for the public good; and thus hath the wise magistrate done in all ages. There is a doing of right out of wrong, if the way be found. Never shall I enough commend a worthy worshipful man, sometime a capital member of this city, for his high wisdom in this point, who would take you now the habit of a porter, now of a carman, now of the dog-killer in this month of August; and in the winter, of a seller of tinder- [50 boxes. And what would he do in all these shapes? marry, go you into every alehouse, and down into every cellar; measure the length of puddings, take the gauge of black pots and cans, ay, and custards, with a stick; and their circumference, with a thread; weigh the loaves of bread on his middle finger; then would he send for them home; give the puddings to [59 the poor, the bread to the hungry, the custards to his children; break the pots, and burn the cans himself: he would not trust his corrupt officers; he would do it himself. Would all men in authority would follow this worthy precedent! for, alas! as we are public persons, what do we know? nay, what *can* we know? we hear with other men's ears, we see with other men's eyes. A foolish constable or a [69 sleepy watchman is all our information; he slanders a gentleman by the virtue of his place, as he calls it, and we, by the vice of ours, must believe him. As, awhile agone, they made me, yea, me, to mistake an honest zealous pursuivant for a seminary; and a proper young bachelor of musick, for a bawd. This we are subject to that live in high place; all our intelligence is idle, and most of our intelligencers knaves; and, by your leave, [80 ourselves thought little better, if not arrant fools, for believing them. I, Adam Overdo, am resolved therefore to spare spy-money hereafter, and make mine own discoveries. Many are the yearly enormities of this Fair, in whose courts of Piepouldres[2] I have had the honor, during the three days, sometimes to sit as judge. But this is the special day for detection of those foresaid enormities. Here is my black book for the purpose; this the [91 cloud that hides me; under this covert I shall see and not be seen. On, Junius Brutus! And, as I began, so I'll end; in justice' name, and the king's, and for the commonwealth! >

LEATH. The Fair's pestilence dead methinks; people come not abroad to-day, whatever the matter is.—Do you hear, sister Trash, lady of the basket? sit farther with your gingerbread progeny [101 there, and hinder not the prospect of my shop, or I'll ha' it proclaimed in the Fair, what stuff they are made on.

TRASH. Why, what stuff are they made on, brother Leatherhead? nothing but what's wholesome, I assure you.

LEATH. Yes, stale bread, rotten eggs, musty ginger, and dead honey, you know.

OVER. <Ay! have I met with enormity so soon?> [*Makes a note in his* [111 *black book.*

LEATH. I shall mar your market, old Joan.

TRASH. Mar my market, thou too-proud pedlar! do thy worst: I defy thee, I, and thy stable of hobby-horses. I pay for my ground as well as thou dost: an thou wrong'st me, for all thou art parcel-poet and an inginer, I'll find a [120 friend shall right me and make a ballad of thee and thy cattle all over. Are you puffed up with the pride of your wares, your arsedine?[3]

LEATH. Go to, old Joan, I'll talk with you anon; and take you down too, afore Justice Overdo: he is the man must charm you, I'll have you in the Piepouldres. [129

TRASH. Charm me! I'll meet thee face to face, afore his worship, when thou darest: and, though I be a little crooked o' my body, I'll be found as upright in my dealing as any woman in Smithfield, I; charm me!

[2] A summary court peculiar to fairs, for the suppression of disorders occurring there, and for the settlement of disputes.

[3] An alloy used for the ornamentation of toys.

OVER. <I am glad to hear my name is their terror yet; this is doing of justice.> [*People pass by.* LEATHERHEAD *proceeds to call his wares.* [139

LEATH. What do you lack? what is't you buy? what do you lack? rattles, drums, halberts, horses, babies o' the best, fiddles of the finest?

Enter COSTARDMONGER.

COST. Buy any pears, pears, fine, very fine pears?

TRASH. Buy any gingerbread, gilt gingerbread?

NIGHTINGALE *enters.*

NIGHT. Hey! [*Sings.* [150

Now the Fair's a-filling!
O for a tune to startle
The birds o' the booths here billing
Yearly with old saint Bartle!
The drunkards they are wading,
The punks and chapmen trading;
Who'd see the Fair without his lading?

Buy any ballads, new ballads?

Enter URSULA *into her booth, coming from the rear portion.* [160

URS. Fie upon't: who would wear out their youth and prime thus in roasting of pigs that had any cooler vocation? hell's a kind of cold cellar to't, a very fine vault, o' my conscience!—What, Mooncalf!

MOON., *within.* Here, mistress.

NIGHT., *entering the booth.* How now, Ursula? in a heat, in a heat? [169

URS., *to* MOONCALF. My chair, you false faucet, you; and my morning's draught, quickly, a bottle of ale, to quench me, rascal. I am all fire and fat, Nightingale; I shall e'en melt away to the first woman, a rib again, I am afraid. I do water the ground in knots, as I go, like a great garden pot; you may follow me by the SS I make.

NIGHT. Alas, good Urs! was Zekiel here this morning? [180

URS. Zekiel? what Zekiel?

NIGHT. Zekiel Edgworth, the civil cutpurse; you know him well enough; he that talks bawdy to you still: I call him my secretary. [OVERDO *takes up a position just outside the booth, where he can hear what is said.*

URS. He promised to be here this morning, I remember. [189

NIGHT. When he comes, bid him stay: I'll be back again presently.

URS. Best take your morning's dew in your belly, Nightingale.—

MOONCALF *enters the booth from the back, with the chair. He is as notable for his leanness, as his mistress is for her hugeness. He carries also a bottle of ale and a tankard.* [198

Come, sir, set it here; did not I bid you should get this chair let out o' the sides for me, that my hips might play? you'll never think of anything till your dame be rump-galled. 'Tis well, changeling: because it can take in your grasshopper's thighs, you care for no more. Now you look as you had been i' the corner of the booth, fleaing your breech with a candle's end, and set fire o' the Fair. Fill, stoat, fill. [*He fills the tankard, and she drinks.*

OVER. <This pig-woman do I know [210 and I will put her in, for my second enormity; [*making an entry in his black book*] she hath been before me, punk, pinnace, and bawd, any time these two and twenty years upon record in the Piepouldres.>

URS. Fill again, you unlucky vermin!

MOON. Pray you be not angry, mistress, I'll ha' it widened anon. [*Refills her tankard.* [220

URS. No, no, I shall e'en dwindle away to't, ere the Fair be done, you think, now you ha' heated me. A poor vexed thing I am; I feel myself dropping already as fast as I can; two stone o' suet a day is my proportion. I can but hold life and soul together with this (here's to you, Nightingale), and a whiff of tobacco at most. [*Drains the tankard again.*] Where's my pipe now? not filled! thou arrant incubee. [231

NIGHT. Nay, Urs'la, thou'lt gall between the tongue and the teeth, with fretting, now.

URS. How can I hope that ever he'll discharge his place of trust, tapster, a man of reckoning under me, that remembers nothing I say to him? [*Exit* NIGHTINGALE.]—But look to't, sirrah, you were best. Threepence a pipeful I will ha' [240 made of all my whole half pound of tobacco, and a quarter of a pound of coltsfoot mixed with it too, to eech[4] it out. I, that have dealt so long in the fire, will not be to seek in smoke now. Then six and twenty shillings a barrel I will advance o' my beer, and fifty shillings a hundred o' my bottle-ale; I ha' told you the ways how to raise it. Froth your cans well i' the filling, at length, rogue, and jog your bottles o' the buttock, sirrah, [251 then skink out the first glass ever, and drink with all companies, though you be sure to be drunk; you'll misreckon the better, and be less ashamed on't. But your true trick, rascal, must be, to be ever busy, and mistake away the bottles and cans, in haste, before they be half drunk off, and never hear anybody call (if they should chance to mark you), till you have brought fresh, and be able to forswear 'em. Give me a drink of ale. [262

OVER. <This is the very womb and bed of enormity! gross as herself! this must all down for enormity, all, every whit on't.> [*Makes another note in his black book. Knocking within.*

URS. Look who's there, sirrah: five shillings a pig is my price, at least; if it be a sow pig, sixpence more; if she be a great-bellied wife and long for't, sixpence more for that. [MOONCALF [272 *vanishes within.*

OVER. <*O tempora! O mores!* I would not ha' lost my discovery of this one grievance, for my place and worship o' the bench. How is the poor subject abused here! Well, I will fall in with her and with her Mooncalf, and win out wonders of enormity!> [*Comes for-* [280 *ward, as* MOONCALF *returns.*] By thy leave, goodly woman, and the fatness of the Fair, oily as the king's constable's lamp, and shining as his shoeing-horn! hath thy ale virtue, or thy beer strength, that the tongue of man may be tickled, and his palate pleased in the morning? Let thy pretty nephew here go search and see.

URS. What new roarer is this? [290

MOON. <O Lord, do you not know him, mistress? 'tis mad Arthur of Bradley, that makes the orations.> Brave master, old Arthur of Bradley, how do you? welcome to the Fair! when shall we hear you again, to handle your matters, with your back again' a booth, ha? I ha' been one o' your little disciples in my days. [299

OVER. Let me drink, boy, with my love, thy aunt here, that I may be eloquent: but of thy best, lest it be bitter in my mouth, and my words fall foul on the Fair.

URS. Why dost thou not fetch him drink, and offer him to sit?

MOON. Is it ale or beer, Master Arthur?

OVER. Thy best, pretty stripling, thy best; the same thy dove drinketh [310 and thou drawest on holydays.

URS., *to* MOONCALF. <Bring him a sixpenny bottle of ale: they say a fool's handsel is lucky.>

OVER. Bring both, child. [*Sits down in the booth.*] Ale for Arthur, and beer for Bradley. Ale for thine aunt,[5] boy. [*Exit.* MOONCALF.] <My disguise takes to the very wish and reach of it. I shall, by the benefit of this, discover enough and more, and yet get off with the reputation [321 of what I would be—a certain middling thing, between a fool and a madman.>

Enter KNOCKHUM *into the booth.*

KNOCK. What, my little lean Urs'la! my she-bear! art thou alive yet, with thy litter of pigs to grunt out another Bartholomew Fair? ha!

URS. Yes, and to amble a foot, when the Fair is done, to hear you groan [330 out of a car, up the heavy hill.

KNOCK. Of Holborn, Urs'la; meanst thou so? for what, for what, pretty Urs?

URS. For cutting halfpenny purses, or stealing little penny dogs out o' the Fair.

[4] a quaint spelling (presumably) of "eke."

[5] a slang term for bawd.

KNOCK. O! good words, good words, Urs.

OVER. <Another special enormity. A cutpurse of the sword, the boot, and the feather! those are his marks.> [*Makes another note.* [341

Re-enter MOONCALF *with the ale and beer, which he gives to* OVERDO.

URS. You are one of those horse-leeches that gave out I was dead, in Turnbull-street, of a surfeit of bottle-ale and tripes?

KNOCK. No, 'twas better meat, Urs: cows' udders, cows' udders!

URS. Well, I shall be meet with your mumbling mouth one day. [351

KNOCK. What! thou'lt poison me with a newt in a bottle of ale, wilt thou? or a spider in a tobacco-pipe, Urs? Come, there's no malice in these fat folks: I never fear thee, an I can scape thy lean Mooncalf here. Let's drink it out, good Urs, and no vapors! [6] [358

[*Exit* URSULA, *to see after her roasting.*

OVER., *giving* MOONCALF *money.* <Dost thou hear, boy? There's for thy ale, and the remnant for thee.—Speak in thy faith of a faucet now; is this goodly person before us here, this vapors, a knight of the knife?

MOON. What mean you by that, Master Arthur?

OVER. I mean, a child of the horn-thumb, a babe of booty, boy, a cutpurse.

MOON. O Lord, sir! far from it. This is Master Daniel Knockhum Jordan: the ranger of Turnbull. He is a [372 horse-courser, sir.

OVER. Thy dainty dame, though, called him cutpurse.

MOON. Like enough, sir; she'll do forty such things in an hour (an you listen to her) for her recreation, if the toy take her in the greasy kerchief: it makes her fat, you see; she battens with it. [380

OVER. <Here might I ha' been deceived now, and ha' put a fool's blot upon myself, if I had not played an after game o' discretion!>

[6] Used with a variety of meanings; usually, "humor" or "conceit" or "contradiction"; here, "quarrelling."

URSULA *re-enters, shedding perspiration about her.*

KNOCK. Alas, poor Urs! this is an ill season for thee.

URS. Hang yourself, hackney-man!

KNOCK. How, how, Urs! vapors? motion breed vapors? [391

URS. Vapors! never tusk, nor twirl your dibble, good Jordan, I know what you'll take to a very drop. Though you be captain of the roarers, and fight well at the case of piss-pots, you shall not fright me with your lion-chap, sir, nor your tusks; you angry! you are hungry. Come, a pig's head will stop your mouth, and stay your stomach at all times. [400

KNOCK. Thou art such another mad, merry Urs, still! troth, I do make conscience of vexing thee now i' the dog-days, this hot weather, for fear of foundering thee i' the body, and melting down a pillar of the Fair. Pray thee take thy chair again, and keep state, and let's have a fresh bottle of ale and a pipe of tobacco, and no vapors. I'll ha' this belly o' thine taken up, and thy grass scoured, wench.— [411

Enter EDGWORTH *into the booth.*

Look, here's Ezechiel Edgworth; a fine boy of his inches, as any is in the Fair! has still money in his purse, and will pay all, with a kind heart and good vapors.

EDG. That I will indeed, willingly, Master Knockhum.—Fetch some ale and tobacco. [MOONCALF *departs, to fulfil the order. People pass by outside the booth; and again* LEATHERHEAD *is foremost in calling his wares.* [422

LEATH. What do you lack, gentlemen? —Maid, see a fine hobby-horse for your young master; cost you but a token a week his provender.

Other visitors to the fair enter, together with NIGHTINGALE, *a* CORNCUTTER *and a* TINDERBOXMAN.

CORN. Have you any corns i' your [430 feet and toes?

TIN. Buy a mousetrap, a mousetrap, or a tormentor for a flea?

TRASH. Buy some gingerbread?

NIGHT. Ballads, ballads! fine new ballads! Hear for your love, and buy for your money, "A delicate ballad o' the ferret and the coney"; "A preservative again' the punk's evil"; Another of [439 "Goose-green starch and the devil"; "A dozen of divine points"; and "The godly garters"; "The fairing of good counsel," of an ell and three quarters. What is't you buy? "The windmill blown down by the witch's fart"; or "Saint George, that, O! did break the dragon's heart"?

MOONCALF *returns to the booth with ale and tobacco.*

EDG. Master Nightingale, come hither, leave your mart a little. [450

NIGHT. O my secretary! what says my secretary? [*Joins him in the booth.*

OVER. Child o' the bottles, what's he? what's he? [*Points to* EDGWORTH.

MOON. A civil young gentleman, Master Arthur, that keeps company with the roarers, and disburses all still. He has ever money in his purse; he pays for them, and they roar for him; one does good offices for another. They call him the secretary, but he serves nobody. A great friend of the ballad-man's, they [462 are never asunder.

OVER. What pity 'tis, so civil a young man should haunt this debauched company! Here's the bane of the youth of our time apparent. A proper penman, I see't in his countenance, he has a good clerk's look with him, and, I warrant him, a quick hand. [470

MOON. A very quick hand, sir. [*Having delivered himself of this cryptic utterance, the full force of which* OVERDO *is far from comprehending,* MOONCALF *retires within.*

EDG. <All the purses and purchase I give you to-day by conveyance, bring hither to Urs'la's presently. Here we will meet at night in her lodge, and share. Look you choose good places for your standing in the Fair, when you sing, Nightingale. [482

URS. Ay, near the fullest passages; and shift them often.

EDG. And i' your singing, you must use your hawk's eye nimbly, and fly the purse to a mark still, where 'tis worn, and o' which side; that you may gi' me the sign with your beak, or hang your head that way i' the tune. [490

URS. Enough, talk no more on't: your friendship, masters, is not now to begin. Drink your draught of indenture, your sup of covenant, and away.> The Fair fills apace, company begins to come in, and I have ne'er a pig ready yet.

KNOCK. Well said! fill the cups, and light the tobacco: let's give fire i' th' works, and noble vapors.

EDG. And shall we ha' smocks, Urs'la, and good whimsies, ha? [501

URS. Come, you are i' your bawdy vein! <The best the Fair will afford, Zekiel, if bawd Whit keep his word.—>

Re-enter MOONCALF.

How do the pigs, Mooncalf?

MOON. Very passionate, mistress; one on 'em has wept out an eye.[7] Master Arthur o' Bradley is melancholy here, nobody talks to him.—Will you any to- [510 bacco, Master Arthur?

OVER. No, boy; let my meditations alone.

MOON. <He's studying for an oration now.>

OVER. <If I can with this day's travail, and all my policy, but rescue this youth here out of the hands of the lewd man and the strange woman, I will sit down at night, and say with my friend Ovid, *"Jamque opus exegi, quod nec Jovis ira, nec ignis," &c.*> [522

KNOCK. Here, Zekiel, here's a health to Ursula, and a kind vapor; thou hast money i' thy purse still, and store! how dost thou come by it? pray thee vapor thy friends some in a courteous vapor.

EDG. Half I have, Master Dan Knockhum, is always at your service. [*Pulls out his purse.* [530

OVER. <Ha, sweet nature! what goshawk would prey upon such a lamb?>

[7] When the eye of a pig in roasting drops out, the pig is considered to be almost roasted enough.

KNOCK. Let's see what 'tis, Zekiel; count it; come, fill him to pledge me.

Enter WINWIFE *and* QUARLOUS.

WINW. We are here before them, methinks.

QUAR. All the better; we shall see 'em come in now. [539

LEATH. What do you lack, gentlemen, what is't you lack? a fine horse? a lion? a bull? a bear? a dog or a cat? an excellent fine Bartholomew-bird? or an instrument? what is't you lack?

QUAR. 'Slid! here's Orpheus among the beasts, with his fiddle and all!

TRASH. Will you buy any comfortable bread,[1] gentlemen?

QUAR. And Ceres selling her daughter's picture, in ginger-work. [550

WINW. That these people should be so ignorant to think us chapmen for 'em! Do we look as if we would buy gingerbread or hobby-horses?

QUAR. Why, they know no better ware than they have, nor better customers than come: and our very being here makes us fit to be demanded, as well as others. Would Cokes would come! there were a true customer for them!> [560

KNOCK., *to* EDGWORTH. How much is't? thirty shillings? Who's yonder! Ned Winwife and Tom Quarlous, I think! yes! yes. (Gi' me it all, gi' me it all.) —Master Winwife! Master Quarlous! will you take a pipe of tobacco with us? —Do not discredit me now, Zekiel. [EDGWORTH *gives him his purse.*

WINW. <Do not see him; he is the roaring horse-courser; pray thee let's avoid him: turn down this way. [571

QUAR. 'Slud, I'll see him, and roar with him too, an he roared as loud as Neptune; pray thee go with me.

WINW. You may draw me to as likely an inconvenience, when you please, as this.

QUAR. Go to then, come along; we ha' nothing to do, man, but to see sights now.>

[*They enter the booth.* [580

KNOCK. Welcome, Master Quarlous, and Master Winwife; will you take any froth and smoke with us?

QUAR. Yes, sir; but you'll pardon us if we knew not of so much familiarity between us afore.

KNOCK. As what, sir?

QUAR. To be so lightly invited to smoke and froth. [589

KNOCK. A good vapor! will you sit down, sir? this is old Urs'la's mansion; how like you her bower? Here you may ha' your punk and your pig in state, sir, both piping hot.

QUAR. I had rather have my punk cold, sir.

OVER. <There's for me: punk! and pig!> [*Makes another note.*

URS., *within.* What, Mooncalf, you rogue! [600

MOON. By and by, the bottle is almost off, mistress.—Here, Master Arthur.

URS., *within.* I'll part you and your playfellow there in the garded coat, an you sunder not the sooner.

KNOCK. Master Winwife, you are proud, methinks; you do not talk, nor drink; are you proud?

WINW. Not of the company I am in, sir, nor the place, I assure you. [610

KNOCK. You do not except at the company, do you? are you in vapors, sir?

MOON. Nay, good Master Daniel Knockhum, respect my mistress' bower, as you call it; for the honor of our booth, none o' your vapors here.

Re-enter URSULA *with a firebrand.*

URS., *to* MOONCALF. <Why, you thin, lean polecat you, an they have a mind to be i' their vapors, must you hinder 'em? What did you know, vermin, if they [621 would have lost a cloak, or such trifle? must you be drawing the air of pacification here, while I am tormented within i' the fire, you weasel?

MOON. Good mistress, 'twas in behalf of your booth's credit that I spoke.

URS. Why! would my booth have [628 broke if they had fallen out in't, sir? or would their heat have fired it?>—In, you rogue, and wipe the pigs, and mend

[1] spiced gingerbread.

the fire, that they fall not, or I'll both baste and roast you till your eyes drop out like them. Leave the bottle behind you, and be curst awhile! [MOONCALF, *thus adjured, goes in, leaving the bottle behind him.* URSULA *make free use of it.*

QUAR. Body o' the Fair! what's this? mother of the bawds?

KNOCK. No, she's mother of the [640 pigs, sir, mother of the pigs.

WINW. Mother of the furies, I think, by her firebrand.

QUAR. Nay, she is too fat to be a fury, sure some walking sow of tallow!

WINW. An inspired vessel of kitchen stuff!

QUAR. She'll make excellent gear for the coachmakers here in Smithfield to anoint wheels and axletrees with. [650

URS. Ay, ay, gamesters, mock a plain, plump, soft wench of the suburbs, do, because she's juicy and wholesome; you must ha' your thin pinched ware, pent up in the compass of a dog-collar (or 'twill not do), that looks like a long-laced conger set upright, and a green feather, like fennel, in the joll on't.

KNOCK. Well said, Urs, my good Urs! to 'em, Urs! [660

QUAR. Is she your quagmire, Daniel Knockhum? is this your bog?

NIGHT. We shall have a quarrel presently.

KNOCK. How! bog? quagmire? foul vapors! humh!

QUAR. Yes, he that would venture for't, I assure him, might sink into her and be drowned a week ere any friend he had could find where he were. [670

WINW. And then he would be a fortnight weighing up again.

QUAR. 'Twere like falling into a whole shire of butter; they had need be a team of Dutchmen should draw him out.

KNOCK. Answer 'em, Urs: where's thy Bartholomew wit now, Urs, thy Bartholomew wit? [678

URS. Hang 'em, rotten, roguy cheaters, I hope to see them plagued one day (poxed they are already, I am sure) with lean playhouse poultry, that has the bony rump sticking out like the ace of spades or the point of a partizan, that every rib of them is like the tooth of a saw, and will so grate them with their hips and shoulders as (take 'em altogether) they were as good lie with a hurdle.

QUAR. Out upon her, how she drips! she's able to give a man the sweating [690 sickness with looking on her.

URS. Marry look off, with a patch on your face and a dozen in your breech, though they be of scarlet, sir! I have seen as fine outsides as either of yours bring lousy linings to the brokers, ere now, twice a week.

QUAR. Do you think there may be [698 a fine new cucking-stool i' the Fair, to be purchased; one large enough, I mean? I know there is a pond of capacity for her.

URS. For your mother, you rascal! Out, you rogue, you hedge-bird, you pimp, you pannier-man's bastard, you!

QUAR. Ha, ha, ha!

URS. Do you sneer, you dog's-head, you trendle-tail! you look as you were begotten atop of a cart in harvest time, when the whelp was hot and eager. Go, snuff after your brother's bitch, Mistress Commodity; that's the livery you wear, 'twill be out at the elbows shortly. [712 It's time you went to't for the t'other remnant.

KNOCK. Peace, Urs; peace, Urs.—<They'll kill the poor whale and make oil of her.> Pray thee, go in.

URS. I'll see them poxed first, and piled, and double piled.

WINW. Let's away: her language [720 grows greasier than her pigs.

URS. Does't so, snotty-nose? Good Lord! are you snivelling? You were engendered on a she-beggar in a barn, when the bald thrasher, your sire, was scarce warm.

WINW. Pray thee let's go.

QUAR. No, faith; I'll stay the end of her now; I know she cannot last long: I find by her similes she wanes apace. [730

URS. Does she so? I'll set you gone.

Gi' me my pig-pan hither a little: I'll scald you hence, an you will not go.

[*Goes inside.*

KNOCK. Gentlemen, these are very strange vapors, and very idle vapors, I assure you.

QUAR. You are a very serious ass, we assure you. [739

KNOCK. Humh, *ass!* and *serious!* nay, then pardon me my vapor. I have a foolish vapor, gentlemen. Any man that does vapor me the "ass", Master Quarlous—

QUAR. What then, Master Jordan?

KNOCK. I do vapor him the lie.

QUAR. Faith, and to any man that vapors me the lie, I do vapor that.

[*Strikes him.*

KNOCK. Nay then, vapors upon vapors.

[*They fight.* [751

Re-enter URSULA *with the dripping-pan.*

EDG. AND NIGHT. 'Ware the pan, the pan, the pan! she comes with the pan, gentlemen! [URSULA *falls with the pan.*] God bless the woman.

URS. Oh! [*Exeunt* QUARLOUS *and* WINWIFE.

TRASH, *running into the booth.* What's the matter? [760

OVER. Goodly woman!

MOON. Mistress!

URS. Curse of hell, that ever I saw these fiends! oh! I have scalded my leg, my leg, my leg, my leg! I have lost a limb in the service! run for some cream and salad oil, quickly. Are you underpeering, you baboon! rip off my hose, an you be men, men, men. [769

MOON. Run you for some cream, good Mother Joan. I'll look to your basket.

[*Exit* TRASH.

LEATH., *who has also rushed into the booth.* Best sit up in your chair, Urs'la. Help, gentlemen.

KNOCK. Be of good cheer, Urs; thou hast hindered me the currying of a couple of stallions here, that abused the good racebawd of Smithfield; 'twas time for them to go. [780

NIGHT. I' faith, when the pan came; they had made you run else.—<[*To* EDGWORTH.] This had been a fine time for purchase, if you had ventured.

EDG. Not a whit; these fellows were too fine to carry money.>

KNOCK. Nightingale, get some help to carry her leg out of the air: take off her shoes. Body o' me! she has the mallanders, the scratches, the crown scab, and the quitter bone in the t'other leg. [791

URS. Oh, the pox! why do you put me in mind of my leg thus, to make it prick and shoot? Would you have me in the hospital afore my time?

KNOCK. Patience, Urs, take a good heart; 'tis but a blister as big as a windgall. I'll take it away with the white of an egg, a little honey and hog's grease, ha' thy pasterns well rolled, and thou shalt pace again by to-morrow. I'll tend thy booth, and look to thy affairs the [802 while: thou shalt sit i' thy chair, and give directions, and shine Ursa major.

[KNOCKHUM *and* MOONCALF *carry* URSULA *within in her chair.*

OVER. These are the fruits of bottle-ale and tobacco! the foam of the one, and the fumes of the other! Stay, young man, and despise not the wisdom of [810 these few hairs that are grown grey in care of thee.

EDG. <Nightingale, stay a little. Indeed I'll hear some of this!>

Enter COKES, *with his box,* WASPE, MISTRESS OVERDO, *and* GRACE.

COKES. Come, Numps, come, where are you? Welcome into the Fair, Mistress Grace. [819

EDG., *to* NIGHTINGALE. <'Slight, he will call company, you shall see, and put us into doings presently.>

OVER. Thirst not after that frothy liquor, ale; for who knows, when he openeth the stopple, what may be in the bottle? Hath not a snail, a spider, yea, a newt been found there? thirst not after it, youth; thirst not after it.

COKES. This is a brave fellow, Numps, let's hear him. [*Runs into the booth, his companions following him.* [831

WASPE. 'Sblood! how brave is he? in a garded coat! You were best truck with him; e'en strip, and truck presently; it will become you. Why will you hear him? because he is an ass, and may be akin to the Cokeses?

COKES. O, good Numps.

OVER. Neither do thou lust after that tawny weed, tobacco. [840

COKES. Brave words!

OVER. Whose complexion is like the Indian's that vents it.

COKES. Are they not brave words, sister?

OVER. And who can tell, if before the gathering and making up thereof, the alligarta hath not pissed thereon?

WASPE. 'Heart! let 'em be brave words, as brave as they will! an they were all [850 the brave words in a country, how then! Will you away yet, ha' you enough on him?—Mistress Grace, come you away; I pray you be not you accessary. If you do lose your licence, or somewhat else, sir, with listening to his fables, say Numps is a witch, with all my heart; do, say so.

COKES. Avoid i' your satin doublet, Numps. [859

OVER. The creeping venom of which subtle serpent, as some late writers affirm, neither the cutting of the perilous plant, nor the drying of it, nor the lighting or burning, can any way perssway[2] or assuage.

COKES. Good, i' faith! is't not, sister?

OVER. Hence it is that the lungs of the tobacconist are rotted, the liver spotted, the brain smoked like the backside of the pigwoman's booth here, and the whole [870 body within, black as her pan you saw e'en now without.

COKES. A fine similitude that, sir! did you see the pan?

EDG. Yes, sir.

OVER. Nay, the hole in the nose here of some tobacco-takers, or the third nostril, if I may so call it, which makes that they can vent the tobacco out, like the ace of clubs, or rather the flower-de-lice, is caused from the tobacco, the mere tobacco! when the poor innocent pox, [882 having nothing to do there, is miserably and most unconscionably slandered.

COKES. Who would have missed this, sister?

MRS. OVER. Not anybody but Numps.

COKES. He does not understand.

EDG. <Nor you feel.> [*Picks* COKES' *pocket of his purse.* [890

COKES. What would you have, sister, of a fellow that knows nothing but a basket-hilt, and an old fox[3] in't? the best music i' the Fair will not move a log.

EDG., *conveying the purse covertly to* NIGHTINGALE. <In, to Urs'la, Nightingale, and carry her comfort: see it told. This fellow was sent to us by Fortune, for our first fairing.> [NIGHTINGALE *goes inside.* [900

OVER. But what speak I of the diseases of the body, children of the Fair?

COKES. That's to us, sister. Brave, i' faith!

OVER. Hark, O you sons and daughters of Smithfield! and hear what malady it doth the mind: it causeth swearing, it causeth swaggering, it causeth snuffling and snarling, and now and then a hurt.

MRS. OVER. He hath something of Master Overdo, methinks, brother. [911

COKES. So methought, sister, very much of my brother Overdo: and 'tis when he speaks.

OVER. Look into any angle of the town, the Straits, or the Bermudas,[4] where the quarrelling lesson is read, and how do they entertain the time, but with bottle-ale and tobacco? The lecturer is o' one side, and his pupils o' the other; but the seconds are still bottle-ale and tobacco, for which the lecturer reads, and the [922 novices pay thirty pound a week in bottle-ale! forty in tobacco! and ten more in ale again! Then, for a suit to drink in, so much; and, that being slavered, so much for another suit; and then a third suit, and a fourth suit! and still the bottle-ale slavereth, and the tobacco stinketh. [930

WASPE, *to* COKES. Heart of a madman!

[2] mitigate.

[3] broadsword.

[4] places frequented by thieves and prostitutes.

are you rooted here? will you never away? what can any man find out in this bawling fellow to grow here for?—He is a full handful higher sin' he heard him.—Will you fix here, and set up a booth, sir?

Over. I will conclude briefly—

Waspe. Hold your peace, you roaring rascal, I'll run my head i' your chaps else.—You were best build a booth, [941 and entertain him; make your will, an you say the word, and him your heir!—Heart, I never knew one taken with a mouth of a peck afore.—By this light, I'll carry you away on my back, an you will not come. [*He gets* Cokes *up on pick-back.*

Cokes. Stay, Numps, stay, set me down. I ha' lost my purse, Numps. [950 O my purse! One o' my fine purses is gone! [*He dismounts.*

Mrs. Over. Is it indeed, brother?

Cokes. Ay, as I am an honest man; would I were an arrant rogue else! a plague of all roguy damned cutpurses for me.

Waspe. Bless 'em with all my heart, with all my heart, do you see! now, as I am no infidel, that I know of, I am glad on't. Ay, I am (here's my witness), do you see, sir? I did not tell you of [962 his fables, I! no, no, I am a dull malt-horse, I; I know nothing. Are you not justly served, i' your conscience now, speak i' your conscience? Much good do you with all my heart, and his good heart that has it, with all my heart again!

Edg. <This fellow is very charitable; would he had a purse too! but I [970 must not be too bold all at a time.>

Cokes. Nay, Numps, it is not my best purse.

Waspe. Not your best! death! why should it be your worst? why should it be any, indeed, at all? answer me to that, give me a reason from you, why it should be any?

Cokes. Nor my gold, Numps; I ha' that yet, look here else, sister. [*Shows the other purse.* [981

Waspe. Why, so, there's all the feeling he has!

Mrs. Over. I pray you have a better care of that, brother.

Cokes. Nay, so I will, I warrant you; let him catch this that catch can. I would fain see him get this, look you here.

Waspe. So, so, so, so, so, so, so, so! [990 very good.

Cokes. I would ha' him come again now, and but offer at it. Sister, will you take notice of a good jest? I will put it just where th' other was, and, if we have good luck, you shall see a delicate fine trap to catch the cutpurse nibbling.

Edg. <Faith, and he'll try ere you be out o' the Fair.> [999

Cokes. Come, Mistress Grace, pre'thee be not melancholy for my mischance; sorrow wi' not keep it, sweetheart.

Grace. I do not think on't, sir.

Cokes. 'Twas but a little scurvy white money, hang it! it may hang the cutpurse one day. I have gold left to give thee a fairing yet, as hard as the world goes. Nothing angers me but that nobody here looked like a cutpurse, unless 'twere Numps. [1010

Waspe. How! I! I look like a cutpurse? death! your sister's a cutpurse! and your mother and father, and all your kin, were cutpurses! and here is a rogue is the bawd o' the cutpurses, whom I will beat to begin with. [*Beats* Overdo.

Cokes, Mrs. Overdo, *and* Overdo *all speak together.*

Cokes. Numps, Numps! [1019

Mrs. Over. Good Master Humphrey!

Over. Hold thy hand, child of wrath, and heir of anger, make it not Childermas day in thy fury, or the feast of the French Bartholomew, parent of the massacre.

Waspe. You are the patrico,[5] are you? the patriarch of the cutpurses? You share, sir, they say; let them share this with you. Are you i' your hot fit of

[5] Among strolling beggars and gipsies the *patrico* is the orator and the hedge priest of the gang.

preaching again? I'll cool you. [*Beats him again.* [1031

OVER. Murther, murther, murther!

[*Runs out under a shower of blows from* WASPE—COKES, GRACE, *and* MRS. OVERDO *following.*

ACT THREE

It is the same scene a little later in the day, with LEATHERHEAD, TRASH, *and others sitting by their wares, as before; but the angle from which it is seen is changed, so that the interior of* URSULA'S *booth is no longer visible to the audience.*

Enter WHIT, HAGGISE, *and* BRISTLE. [7

WHIT.[1] Nay, tish all gone, now! dish tish, phen tou vilt not be phitin call, master offisher, phat ish a man te better to lishen out noyshes for tee, and tou art in an oder 'orld, being very shuffishient noyshes and gallantsh too? one o' their brabblesh would have fed ush all dish fortnight, but tou art so bushy about beggersh still, tou hast no leshure to intend shentlemen, and't be.

HAG. Why, I told you, Davy Bristle. [18

BRI. Come, come, you told me a pudding, Toby Haggise; a matter of nothing; I am sure it came to nothing. You said, let's go to Urs'la's, indeed; but then you met the man with the monsters, and I could not get you from him. An old fool, not leave seeing yet!

HAG. Why, who would have thought anybody would ha' quarrelled so early; or that the ale o' the fair would ha' been up so soon?

WHIT. Phy, phat a' clock toest tou [30 tink it ish, man?

HAG. I cannot tell.

WHIT. Tou art a vishe vatchman, i' te mean teem.

HAG. Why, should the watch go by the clock, or the clock by the watch, I pray?

BRI. One should go by another, if they did well.

WHIT. Tou art right now; phen didst tou ever know or hear of a shuffishient vatchman, but he did tell the clock, phat bushiness soever he had? [42

BRI. Nay, that's most true, a sufficient watchman knows what a'clock it is.

WHIT. Shleeping or vaking: ash well as te clock himshelf, or te Jack dat shtrikes him.

BRI. Let's inquire of Master Leatherhead, or Joan Trash here.—Master Leatherhead, do you hear, Master [50 Leatherhead?

WHIT. If it be a Ledderhead, tish a very tick Ledderhead, tat sho mush noish vill not piersh him.

LEATH. I have a little business now, good friends, do not trouble me.

WHIT. Phat, because o' ty wrought neet-cap, and ty phelvet sherkin, man? phy! I have sheene tee in ty ledder sherkin, ere now, mashter o' de hobby-horses as bushy and stately as tou sheemest to be. [62

TRASH. Why, what an' you have, Captain Whit? he has his choice of jerkins, you may see by that, and his caps too, I assure you, when he pleases to be either sick or employed.

LEATH. God-a-mercy, Joan, answer for me. [69

WHIT. Away, be not sheen i' my company; here be shentlemen, and men of vorship. [*Exeunt* HAGGISE *and* BRISTLE.

Enter QUARLOUS *and* WINWIFE.

QUAR. We had wonderful ill luck, to miss this prologue o' the purse; but the best is, we shall have five acts of him ere night: he'll be spectacle enough, I'll answer for't. [78

WHIT. O Creesh![2] Duke Quarlous, how dosht tou? tou dosht not know me, I fear: I am te vishesht man, but Justish Overdo, in all Bartholomew Fair now. Gi' me twelve pence from tee, I vill help tee to a vife vorth forty marks for't, and't be.

QUAR. Away, rogue; pimp, away.

WHIT. And she shall shew tee as fine cut'ork for't in her shmock too as tou cansht vish, i' faith; vilt tou have her, vorshipful Vinvife? I vill help tee [90

[1] Whit's dialect is meant to be Irish.

[2] Christ.

to her here, be an't be, into pig-quarter, gi' me ty twelve pence from tee.

WINW. Why, there's twelve pence; pray thee wilt thou begone?

WHIT. Tou art a vorthy man, and a vorshipful man still.

QUAR. Get you gone, rascal.

WHIT. I do mean it, man. Prinsh Quarlous, if tou hasht need on me, tou shalt find me here at Urs'la's: I vill see phat ale and punk ish i' te pigshty for tee, bless ty good vorship. [*Disap-* [102
pears into URSULA'S *booth.*

QUAR. Look! who comes here: John Littlewit!

WINW. And his wife, and my widow, her mother: the whole family.

QUAR. 'Slight, you must gi' 'em all fairings now.

WINW. Not I; I'll not see 'em. [110

QUAR. They are going a-feasting. What schoolmaster's that is with 'em?

WINW. That's my rival, I believe, the baker.

Enter RABBI BUSY, DAME PURECRAFT, JOHN LITTLEWIT, *and* MRS. LITTLEWIT.

BUSY. So, walk on in the middle way, fore-right, turn neither to the right hand nor to the left; let not your eyes be drawn aside with vanity, nor your ear with noises. [121

QUAR. <O, I know him by that start.>

LEATH. What do you lack, what do you buy, pretty mistress? a fine hobby-horse, to make your son a tilter? a drum, to make him a soldier? a fiddle, to make him a reveller? what is't you lack? little dogs for your daughters? or babies, male or female? [129

BUSY. Look not toward them; hearken not; the place is Smithfield, or the field of smiths, the grove of hobby-horses and trinkets, the wares are the wares of devils, and the whole Fair is the shop of Satan: they are hooks and baits, very baits, that are hung out on every side, to catch you, and to hold you, as it were, by the gills, and by the nostrils, as the fisher doth; therefore you must not look nor turn toward them. The heathen man could stop his ears with wax against the harlot o' the sea; do you the like [142
with your fingers against the bells of the beast.

WINW. <What flashes comes from him!

QUAR. O, he has those of his oven; a notable hot baker 'twas when he plied the peel.[3] He is leading his flock into the Fair now. [150

WINW. Rather driving 'em to the pens; for he will let 'em look upon nothing.>

Enter KNOCKHUM *and* WHIT *from* URSULA'S *booth.* LITTLEWIT *is gazing at the sign, which shows a pig's head, with a large writing under it.*

KNOCK. Gentlewomen, the weather's hot; whither walk you? have a care o' [159
your fine velvet caps; the Fair is dusty. Take a sweet delicate booth, with boughs, here in the way, and cool yourselves i' the shade; you and your friends. The best pig and bottle-ale i' the Fair, sir. Old Urs'la is cook, there you may read; [*points to the sign*] the pig's head speaks it. Poor soul, she has had a stringhalt, the maryhinchco; but she's prettily amended. [169

WHIT. A delicate show-pig, little mistress, with shweet sauce, and crackling, like de bay-leaf i' de fire, la! tou shalt ha' de clean side o' de tableclot, and di glass vashed with phatersh of Dame Annesh Clear.[4]

LIT. This's fine, verily. "Here be the best pigs, and she does roast 'em as well as ever she did," the pig's head says.

KNOCK. Excellent, excellent, mistress! with fire o' juniper and rosemary [180
branches!—The oracle of the pig's head, that, sir.

PURE. Son, were you not warned of the vanity of the eye? have you forgot the wholesome admonition so soon?

LIT. Good mother, how shall we find a pig, if we do not look about for't? will it run off o' the spit, into our mouths, think

[3] The shovel-like instrument with which bakers take their bread from the oven.

[4] Water from the Hoxton spring known as Annis the Clear.

you, as in Lubberland, and cry "wee, wee"? [190

Busy. No, but your mother, religiously wise, conceiveth it may offer itself by other means to the sense, as by way of steam, which I think it doth here in this place—huh, huh—[*he scents after it like a hound*] yes, it doth. And it were a sin of obstinacy, great obstinacy, high and horrible obstinacy, to decline or resist the good titillation of the famelic sense, which is the smell. Therefore be [200 bold—huh, huh, huh—follow the scent: enter the tents of the unclean, for once, and satisfy your wife's frailty. Let your frail wife be satisfied; your zealous mother and my suffering self will also be satisfied.

Lit. Come, Win, as good winny[5] here as go farther and see nothing.

Busy. We scape so much of the other vanities by our early entering. [210

Pure. It is an edifying consideration.

Mrs. Lit., *to her husband.* <This is scurvy, that we must come into the Fair, and not look on't.

Lit. Win, have patience, Win; I'll tell you more anon.> [Littlewit, Mrs. Littlewit, Busy, *and* Purecraft *go into the booth.*

Knock. Mooncalf, entertain within [219 there: the best pig in the booth, a pork-like pig. These are Banbury bloods, o' the sincere stud, come a-pig-hunting.—Whit, wait, Whit, look to your charge.

[Whit *vanishes into the booth.*

Busy, *within.* A pig prepare presently; let a pig be prepared to us.

Enter from the booth Mooncalf *and* Ursula.

Moon. <'Slight, who be these?

Urs. Is this the good service, Jordan, you'd do me? [231

Knock. Why, Urs, why, Urs? thou'lt have vapors i' thy leg again presently. Pray thee go in, 't may turn to the scratches else.

Urs. Hang your vapors, they are stale, and stink like you! Are these the guests o' the game you promised to fill my pit withal to-day?

Knock. Ay, what ail they, Urs? [240

Urs. Ail they! they are all sippers, sippers o' the city; they look as they would not drink off two penn'orth of bottle-ale amongst 'em.

Moon. A body may read that i' their small printed ruffs.

Knock. Away, thou art a fool, Urs, and thy Mooncalf too: i' your ignorant vapors now! hence; good guests, I say, right hypocrites, good gluttons. [*To* [250 Mooncalf.] In, and set a couple o' pigs o' the board, and half a dozen of the biggest bottles afore 'em, and call Whit. [Mooncalf *goes in.*] I do not love to hear innocents abused: fine ambling hypocrites! and a stone-puritan with a sorrel head and beard! good mouthed glutton; two to a pig, away.

Urs. Are you sure they are such? [259

Knock. O' the right breed; thou shalt try 'em by the teeth, Urs.>—Where's this Whit?

Re-enter Whit.

Whit.

"Behold, man, and see,
What a worthy man am ee!
With the fury of my sword,
And the shaking of my beard,
I will make ten thousand men afeard."

Knock. Well said, brave Whit! in, and *fear* the ale out o' the bottles into the bellies of the brethren, and [see that] [272 the sisters drink to the cause, and pure vapors. [Knockhum, Whit, *and* Ursula *go into the booth.*

Quar. My roarer is turned tapster, methinks. Now were a fine time for thee, Winwife, to lay aboard thy widow; thou'lt never be master of a better season or place; she that will venture herself [280 into the Fair and a pig-box will admit any assault, be assured of that.

Winw. I love not enterprises of that suddenness, though.

Quar. I'll warrant thee, then, no wife out o' the widow's hundred: if I had but as much title to her as to have breathed

[5] stay.

once on that straight stomacher of hers, I would now assure myself to carry her yet ere she went out of Smithfield; or she [290 should carry me, which were the fitter sight, I confess. But you are a modest undertaker, by circumstances and degrees; come, 'tis disease in thee, not judgment; I should offer at all together.—

Enter Overdo.

Look, here's the poor fool again, that was stung by the Wasp erewhile.

Over. <I will make no more orations shall draw on these tragical conclusions. And I begin now to think that, by a spice of collateral justice, Adam Overdo de- [302 served this beating; for I, the said Adam, was one cause (a by-cause) why the purse was lost; and my wife's brother's purse too, which they know not of yet. But I shall make very good mirth with it at supper; that will be the sport, and put my little friend Master Humphrey Waspe's choler quite out of countenance, when, sitting at the upper end of my [311 table, as I use, and drinking to my brother Cokes, and Mistress Alice Overdo, as I will, my wife, for their good affection to old Bradley, I deliver to 'em, it was I that was cudgelled, and show 'em the marks. To see what bad events may peep out o' the tail of good purposes! the care I had of that civil young man I took fancy to this morning (and have not left it yet) drew me to that [321 exhortation; which drew the company indeed; which drew the cutpurse; which drew the money; which drew my brother Cokes his loss; which drew on Waspe's anger; which drew on my beating: a pretty gradation! and they shall ha' it i' their dish, i' faith, at night for fruit; I love to be merry at my table. I had thought once, at one special blow he [330 ga' me, to have revealed myself; but then (I thank thee, fortitude) I remembered that a wise man, and who is ever so great a part of the commonwealth in himself, for no particular disaster ought to abandon a public good design. The husbandman ought not, for one unthankful year, to forsake the plough; the shepherd [338 ought not, for one scabbed sheep, to throw by his tar-box; the pilot ought not, for one leak i' the poop, to quit the helm; nor the alderman ought not, for one custard more at a meal, to give up his cloak; the constable ought not to break his staff, and forswear the watch, for one roaring night; nor the piper o' the parish, *ut parvis componere magna solebam,* to put up his pipes for one rainy Sunday. These are certain knocking conclusions; out of which, I am resolved, come what come can, come beating, come imprisonment, come infamy, come banishment, nay, [352 come the rack, come the hurdle (welcome all), I will not discover who I am, till my due time; and yet still all shall be, as I said ever, in justice' name, and the king's, and for the commonwealth.>

Winw. <What does he talk to himself, and act so seriously, poor fool!

Quar. No matter what. Here's [360 fresher argument: intend that.> [Overdo *goes out.*

Enter Cokes, Mistress Overdo, *and* Grace Wellborn, *followed by* Waspe, *loaded with toys.*

Cokes. Come, Mistress Grace, come, sister, here's more fine sights yet, i' faith. God'slid! where's Numps?

Leath. What do you lack, gentlemen? what is't you buy? fine rattles, drums, babies, little dogs, and birds for ladies? what do you lack? [372

Cokes. Good honest Numps, keep afore, I am so afraid thou'lt lose somewhat; my heart was at my mouth when I missed thee.

Waspe. You were best buy a whip i' your hand to drive me. [378

Cokes. Nay, do not mistake, Numps; thou art so apt to mistake! I would but watch the goods. Look you now, the treble fiddle was e'en almost like to be lost.

Waspe. Pray you take heed you lose not yourself; your best way were e'en get up and ride for more surety. Buy a token's[6] worth of great pins, to fasten yourself to my shoulder.

[6] a farthing's worth.

LEATH. What do you lack, gentlemen? fine purses, pouches, pin-cases, pipes? what is't you lack? a pair o' smiths to wake you i' the morning? or a fine [392 whistling bird?

COKES. Numps, here be finer things than any we ha' bought, by odds! and more delicate horses, a great deal; good Numps, stay, and come hither.

WASPE. Will you scourse[7] with him? you are in Smithfield: you may fit yourself with a fine easy-going street-nag, for your saddle, again' Michaelmas term, do: has he ne'er a little odd cart for you [402 to make a caroch on i' the country, with four pied hobby-horses? Why the measles should you stand here, with your train, cheaping of dogs, birds, and babies? you ha' no children to bestow them on, ha' you?

COKES. No, but again' I ha' children, Numps, that's all one. [410

WASPE. Do, do, do, do; how many shall you have, think you? an I were as you, I'd buy for all my tenants too: they are a kind o' civil savages that will part with their children for rattles, pipes, and knives. You were best buy a hatchet or two, and truck with 'em.

COKES. Good Numps, hold that little tongue o' thine, and save it a labor. I am resolute Bat, thou know'st. [420

WASPE. A resolute fool you are, I know, and a very sufficient coxcomb; with all my heart; (nay, you have it, sir, an you be angry) turd i' your teeth, twice, if I said it not once afore, and much good do you.

WINW. <Was there ever such a self-affliction, and so impertinent?

QUAR. Alas, his care will go near to crack him; let's in and comfort him.>

[*They come forward.* [431

WASPE. Would I had been set i' the ground, all but the head on me, and had my brains bowled at or threshed out when first I underwent this plague of a charge!

QUAR. How now, Numps! almost tired i' your protectorship? overparted, overparted?

[7] bargain.

WASPE. Why, I cannot tell, sir, it may be I am; does't grieve you? [441

QUAR. No, I swear does't not, Numps; to satisfy you.

WASPE. Numps! 'sblood, you are fine and familiar: how long ha' we been acquainted, I pray you?

QUAR. I think it may be remembered, Numps, that; 'twas since morning, sure.

WASPE. Why, I hope I know't well enough, sir; I did not ask to be told. [450

QUAR. No! why, then?

WASPE. It's no matter why; you see with your eyes now what I said to you to-day: you'll believe me another time.

QUAR. Are you removing the Fair, Numps?

WASPE. A pretty question, and a very civil one! yes, faith, I ha' my lading, you see, or shall have anon; you may know whose beast I am by my burden. If [460 the pannier-man's jack were ever better known by his loins of mutton, I'll be flayed, and feed dogs for him when his time comes.

WINW. How melancholy Mistress Grace is yonder! pray thee, let's go enter ourselves in grace with her.

COKES. Those six horses, friend, I'll have—

WASPE. How! [470

COKES. And the three Jews-trumps; and half a dozen o' birds, and that drum (I have one drum already) and your smiths; I like that device o' your smiths, very pretty well; and four halberts—and, le' me see, that fine painted great lady and her three women for state I'll have.

WASPE. No, the shop; buy the whole shop, it will be best; the shop, the shop!

LEATH. If his worship please. [481

WASPE. Yes, and keep it during the Fair, Bobchin.

COKES. Peace, Numps.—Friend, do not meddle with him, an' you be wise, and would show your head above board; he will sting thorough your wrought night-cap, believe me. A set of these violins I would buy too, for a delicate young noise[8] I have i' the country, that are

[8] party of musicians.

every one a size less than another, just like your fiddles. I would fain have a [492 fine young masque at my marriage, now I think on't: but I do want such a number o' things! And Numps will not help me now, and I dare not speak to him.

TRASH. Will your worship buy any gingerbread, very good bread, comfortable bread? [500

COKES. Gingerbread! yes, let's see.

[*Runs to her shop.*

WASPE. There's the t'other springe.

LEATH. Is this well, goody Joan, to interrupt my market in the midst, and call away my customers? can you answer this at the pie-pouldres?

TRASH. Why, if his mastership have a mind to buy, I hope my ware lies as open as another's; I may show my ware as well as you yours. [511

COKES. Hold your peace; I'll content you both. I'll buy up his shop, and thy basket.

WASPE. Will you, i' faith?

LEATH. Why should you put him from it, friend?

WASPE. Cry you mercy! you'd be sold too, would you? what's the price on you, jerkin and all, as you stand? ha' you [520 any qualities?

TRASH. Yes, good-man, angry-man, you shall find he has qualities, if you cheapen him.

WASPE. Gods-so! you ha' the selling of him! What are they, will they be bought for love or money?

TRASH. No, indeed, sir.

WASPE. For what then, victuals? [529

TRASH. He scorns victuals, sir; he has bread and butter at home, thanks be to God! and yet he will do more for a good meal, if the toy take him, i' the belly; marry, then they must not set him at lower end; if they do, he'll go away, though he fast: but put him a-top o' the table, where his place is, and he'll do you forty fine things. He has not been sent for, and sought out for nothing, at your great city-suppers, to put down Coriat [540 and Cokely,[9] and been laughed at for his labor; he'll play you all the puppets i' the town over, and the players, every company, and his own company too; he spares nobody.

COKES. I' faith?

TRASH. He was the first, sir, that ever baited the fellow in the bear's skin, an't like your worship: no dog ever came near him since. And for fine motions! [550

COKES. Is he good at those too? can he set out a masque, trow?

TRASH. O lord, master! sought to far and near for his inventions; and he engrosses all, he makes all the puppets i' the Fair.

COKES. Dost thou, in troth, old velvet jerkin? give me thy hand.

TRASH. Nay, sir, you shall see him in his velvet jerkin, and a scarf too at night, when you hear him interpret Master Littlewit's motion. [562

COKES. Speak no more, but shut up shop presently, friend; I'll buy both it and thee too, to carry down with me; and her hamper beside. Thy shop shall furnish out the masque, and hers the banquet. I cannot go less, to set out anything with credit. What's the price, at a word, o' thy whole shop, case and all as it stands? [571

LEATH. Sir, it stands me in six-and-twenty shillings sevenpence halfpenny, besides three shillings for my ground.

COKES. Well, thirty shillings will do all then! [*Gives him money.*]—And what comes yours to?

TRASH. Four shillings and elevenpence, sir, ground and all, an't like your worship. [580

COKES. Yes, it does like my worship very well, poor woman; that's five shillings more. [*Gives her ten shillings.*] What a masque shall I furnish out, for forty shillings, twenty pound Scotch, and a banquet of gingerbread! there's a stately thing! Numps! sister! and my

[9] Coryat, the author of the famous "Crudities," was a traveller who was a frequent butt for the pleasantries of the dramatists. Cokely was a puppet-master. The characterization of Leatherhead here goes far to identify him with Inigo Jones.

wedding gloves too! that I never thought on afore! All my wedding gloves, [589 gingerbread? O me! what a device will there be, to make 'em eat their fingers' ends? and delicate brooches for the bridemen and all! and then I'll ha' this poesie put to 'em, "For the best grace," meaning Mistress Grace, my wedding poesie.

GRACE. I am beholden to you, sir, and to your Bartholomew wit.

WASPE. You do not mean this, do you? Is this your first purchase? [599

COKES. Yes, faith; and I do not think, Numps, but thou'lt say, it was the wisest act that ever I did in my wardship.

WASPE. Like enough! I shall say anything, I!

Enter EDGWORTH *and* NIGHTINGALE, *followed, at a distance, by* OVERDO.

OVER. <I cannot beget a project, with all my political brain yet: my project is how to fetch off this proper young man from his debauched company. I have [610 followed him all the Fair over, and still I find him with this songster, and I begin shrewdly to suspect their familiarity; and the young man of a terrible taint, poetry! with which idle disease if he be infected, there's no hope of him in a state-course. *Actum est* of him for a commonwealth's-man, if he go to't in rhyme once.> [619

EDG., *to* NIGHTINGALE. <Yonder he is buying of gingerbread; set in quickly, before he part with too much on his money.>

NIGHT., *advancing and singing.*

"My masters and friends, and good people, draw near", etc.—

COKES, *running to* NIGHTINGALE. Ballads! hark, hark! pray thee, fellow, stay a little! good Numps, look to the goods. What ballads hast thou? let me see; [630 let me see myself.

WASPE. Why so! he's flown to another lime-bush. There he will flutter as long more; till he ha' ne'er a feather left. Is there a vexation like this, gentlemen? will you believe me now? hereafter shall I have credit with you?

QUAR. Yes, faith, shalt thou, Numps; and thou art worthy on't, for thou sweatest for't. I never saw a young pimperrant and his squire better matched. [641

WINW. Faith, the sister comes after 'em well too.

GRACE. Nay, if you saw the justice her husband, my guardian, you were fitted for the mess, he is such a wise one his way—

WINW. I wonder we see him not here.

GRACE. O! he is too serious for this place, and yet better sport then than the other three, I assure you, gentlemen, [651 where'er he is, though 't be o' the bench.

COKES. How dost thou call it? "A caveat against cutpurses"! a good jest, i' faith! I would fain see that demon, your cutpurse you talk of, that delicate-handed devil; they say he walks hereabout; I would see him walk now. Look you, sister, here, here [*he shows his* [659 *purse boastingly*]: let him come, sister, and welcome. Ballad-man, does any cutpurses haunt hereabout? pray thee raise me one or two; begin, and show me one.

NIGHT. Sir, this is a spell against 'em, spick and span new; and 'tis made as 'twere in mine own person, and I sing it in mine own defence. But 'twill cost a penny alone, if you buy it.

COKES. No matter for the price; thou dost not know me, I see: I am an [670 odd Bartholomew.

MRS. OVER. Has't a fine picture, brother?

COKES. O, sister, do you remember the ballads over the nursery chimney at home o' my own pasting up? there be brave pictures, other manner of pictures than these, friend.

WASPE. Yet these will serve to pick the pictures out o' your pockets, you shall see. [681

COKES. So, "I heard 'em say."—Pray thee mind him not, fellow; he'll have an oar in everything.

NIGHT. It was intended, sir, as if a purse should chance to be cut in my presence now; I may be blameless though, as by the sequel will more plainly appear.

COKES. We shall find that i' the matter: pray thee begin. [690

NIGHT. To the tune of Paggington's pound, sir.

COKES., *singing*. Fa, la la la, la la la, fa la la la! Nay, I'll put thee in tune and all! mine own country dance! Pray thee begin.

NIGHT. It is a gentle admonition, you must know, sir, both to the purse-cutter and the purse-bearer. [699

COKES. Not a word more out o' the tune, an thou lov'st me: Fa, la la la, la la la, fa la la la. Come, when?

NIGHT., *sings*.

"My masters, and friends, and good people, draw near,
And look to your purses; for that I do say;"

COKES. Ha, ha, this chimes! Good counsel at first dash.

NIGHT. [710

"And, tho' little money in them you do bear,
It cost more to get than to lose in a day."

COKES. Good!

NIGHT.

"You oft have been told,
Both the young and the old,
And bidden beware of the cutpurse so bold;
Then, if you take heed not, free me from the curse, [720
Who both give you warning for, and the cutpurse."

COKES. Well said! he were to blame that would not, i' faith.

NIGHT.

"Youth, youth, thou hadst better been starved by thy nurse,
Than live to be hanged for cutting a purse."

COKES. Good, i' faith; how say you, Numps, is there any harm i' this? [730

NIGHT.

"It hath been upbraided to men of my trade,
That oftentimes we are the cause of this crime;"

COKES. The more coxcombs they that did it, I wusse.

NIGHT.

"Alack and for pity, why should it be said?
As if they regarded or place or time! [740
Examples have been
Of some that were seen
In Westminster-hall, yea, the pleaders between;
Then why should the judges be free from this curse,
More than my poor self, for cutting the purse?"

COKES. God a mercy for that! why should they be more free indeed? [750

NIGHT.

"Youth, youth, thou hadst better been starved by thy nurse,
Than live to be hanged for cutting a purse."

COKES. That again, good ballad-man, that again. [*He sings the burden with him.*] O, rare! I would fain rub mine elbow now, but I dare not pull out my [759 hand. On, I pray thee; he that made this ballad shall be poet to my masque.

NIGHT.

"At Worcester 'tis known well, and even i' the jail,
A knight of good worship did there show his face,
Against the foul sinners in zeal for to rail,
And lost *ipso facto* his purse in the place."

COKES. Is it possible?

NIGHT. [770

"Nay, once from the seat
Of judgment so great,
A judge there did lose a fair pouch of velvéte."

COKES. I' faith?

NIGHT.

"O Lord for thy mercy, how wicked or worse,
Are those that so venture their necks for a purse! [780
Youth, youth, thou hadst better been starved by thy nurse,
Than live to be hanged for cutting a purse."

COKES., *singing after him*. "Youth, youth," etc.—Pray thee stay a little,

friend. Yet, o' thy conscience, Numps, speak, is there any harm in this? [788

WASPE. To tell you true, 'tis too good for you, less you had grace to follow it.

OVER. <It doth discover enormity; I'll mark it more: I ha' not liked a paltry piece of poetry so well a good while.>

COKES. "Youth, youth," etc.; where's this youth now? a man must call upon him for his own good, and yet he will not appear. Look here, here's for him; [*shows his purse*] handy dandy, which hand will he have? On, I pray thee with the rest; I do hear of him, but I cannot see him, this master youth, the cut- [801 purse.

NIGHT.

"At plays, and at sermons, and at the sessións,
'Tis daily their practice such booty to make;
Yea, under the gallows at executións,
They stick not the stare-abouts' purses to take. [810
Nay, one without grace,
At a better place,
At court, and in Christmas, before the king's face;"

COKES. That was a fine fellow! I would have him now.

NIGHT.

"Alack then for pity must I bear the curse,
That only belongs to the cunning cutpurse?" [820

COKES. But where's their cunning now, when they should use it? they are all chained now, I warrant you. [*Sings.*]

"Youth, youth, thou hadst better", etc.

The rat-catchers' charms are all fools and asses to this; a pox on 'em, that they will not come; that a man should have such a desire to a thing, and want it!

QUAR. 'Fore God I'd give half the Fair, an 'twere mine, for a cutpurse for him, to save his longing. [831

COKES. Look you, sister, [*showing his purse again*] here, here, where is't now? which pocket is't in, for a wager!

WASPE. I beseech you leave your wagers, and let him end his matter, an't may be.

COKES. O, are you edified, Numps?

OVER. <Indeed he does interrupt him too much: there Numps spoke to [840 purpose.>

COKES. Sister, I am an ass, I cannot keep my purse! [*Shows it again, and puts it up.*] On, on, I pray thee, friend. [*As* NIGHTINGALE *sings,* EDGWORTH *gets up to* COKES *and tickles him in the ear with a straw twice to draw his hand out of his pocket.*

NIGHT. [849

"But O, you vile nation of cutpurses all,
Relent and repent, and amend and be sound,
And know that you ought not, by honest men's fall,
Advance your own fortunes, to die above ground;
And, though you go gay
In silks, as you may,"—

WINW. <Will you see sport? look, there's a fellow gathers up to him; mark.

QUAR. Good, i' faith! O, he has lighted on the wrong pocket. [861

WINW. He has it! 'fore God, he is a brave fellow: pity he should be detected.>

NIGHT.

"It is not the highway to heaven (as they say).
Repent then, repent you, for better, for worse,
And kiss not the gallows for cutting [870 a purse.
Youth, youth, thou hadst better been starved by thy nurse
Than live to be hanged for cutting a purse."

ALL. An excellent ballad! an excellent ballad!

EDG. Friend, let me ha' the first, let me ha' the first, I pray you. [*As* NIGHTINGALE *hands out a copy of the ballad,* EDGWORTH *slips the purse into his hand.*

COKES. Pardon me, sir; first come first served; and I'll buy the whole [882 bundle too.

WINW. <That conveyance was better than all, did you see't? he has given the purse to the ballad-singer.

Quar. Has he?>

Edg. Sir, I cry you mercy, I'll not hinder the poor man's profit; pray you, mistake me not. [890

Cokes. Sir, I take you for an honest gentleman, if that be mistaking; I met you to-day afore: ha! humh! O God! my purse is gone, my purse, my purse! etc.[10]

Waspe. Come, do not make a stir, and cry yourself an ass thorough the Fair afore your time.

Cokes. Why, hast thou it, Numps? good Numps, how came you by it, I marle? [901

Waspe. I pray you seek some other gamester to play the fool with; you may lose it time enough, for all your Fair wit.

Cokes. By this good hand, glove and all, I ha' lost it already, if thou hast it not; feel else, and Mistress Grace's handkercher too, out of the t'other pocket.

Waspe. Why, 'tis well, very well, exceeding pretty and well. [910

Edg. Are you sure you ha' lost it, sir?

Cokes. O God! yes; as I am an honest man, I had it but e'en now, at "Youth, youth."

Night. I hope you suspect not me, sir?

Edg. Thee! that were a jest indeed! dost thou think the gentleman is foolish? where hadst thou hands, I pray thee? <Away, ass, away!> [*Exit* Nightingale.] [920

Over. <I shall be beaten again if I be spied.> [*Attemps to sneak away unseen.*

Edg. Sir, I suspect an odd fellow, yonder, is stealing away.

Mrs. Over. Brother, it is the preaching fellow: you shall suspect him. He was at your t'other purse, you know! [*Seizes* Overdo.] Nay, stay, sir, and view the work you ha' done; an you be beneficed at the gallows, and preach there, thank your own handiwork. [931

Cokes. Sir, you shall take no pride in your preferment, you shall be silenced quickly. [Overdo *is seized by* Cokes *and others.*

[10] The "etc." is an intimation that the actor of the part might improvise other exclamations of dismay.

Over. What do you mean, sweet buds of gentility?

Cokes. To ha' my pennyworths out on you, bud. No less than two purses a day serve you? I thought you a simple [940 fellow, when my man Numps beat you i' the morning, and pitied you.

Mrs. Over. So did I, I'll be sworn, brother; but now I see he is a lewd and pernicious enormity, as Master Overdo calls him.

Over. <Mine own words turned upon me like swords!>

Cokes. Cannot a man's purse be at quiet for you i' the master's pocket, but you must entice it forth, and debauch it? [Overdo *is carried off.* [952

Waspe. Sir, sir, keep your debauch, and your fine Bartholomew terms to yourself, and make as much on 'em as you please. But gi' me this from you i' the meantime, I beseech you; [*trying to take from him the box containing the license*] see if I can look to this.

Cokes. Why, Numps? [960

Waspe. Why! because you are an ass, sir, there's a reason the shortest way, an you will needs ha' it: now you ha' got the trick of losing, you'd lose your breech an 'twere loose. I know you, sir, come, deliver. [*Takes the box from him.*] You'll go and crack the vermin you breed now, will you? 'tis very fine; will you [968 ha' the truth on't? they are such retchless flies as you are that blow cutpurses abroad in every corner; your foolish having of money makes 'em. An there were no wiser than I, sir, the trade should lie open for you, sir, it should, i' faith, sir. I would teach your wit to come to your head, sir, as well as your land to come into your hand, I assure you, sir.

Winw. Alack, good Numps! [978

Waspe. Nay, gentlemen, never pity me, I am not worth it.—Lord send me home at once to Harrow o' the Hill again! if I travel any more, call me Coryat with all my heart. [*Exeunt* Waspe, Cokes, *and* Mrs. Overdo. Edgworth *is about to follow them, when* Quarlous *stops him.*

QUAR. <Stay, sir, I must have a word with you in private. Do you hear?

EDG. With me, sir? what's your pleasure, good sir? [990

QUAR. Do not deny it: you are a cutpurse, sir; this gentleman here and I saw you: nor do we mean to detect you, though we can sufficiently inform ourselves toward the danger of concealing you; but you must do us a piece of service.

EDG. Good gentlemen, do not undo me; I am a civil young man, and but a beginner indeed. [1000

QUAR. Sir, your beginning shall bring on your ending for us: we are no catchpoles nor constables. That you are to undertake is this; you saw the old fellow with the black box here?

EDG. The little old governor, sir?

QUAR. That same: I see you have flown him to a mark already. I would ha' you get away that box from him, and bring it us. [1010

EDG. Would you ha' the box and all, sir, or only that that is in't? I'll get you that, and leave him the box to play with still, which will be the harder o' the two, because I would gain your worship's good opinion of me.

WINW. He says well; 'tis the greater mastery, and 'twill make the more sport when 'tis missed.

EDG. Ay, and 'twill be the longer amissing, to draw on the sport. [1021

QUAR. But look you do it, now, sirrah, and keep your word, or—

EDG. Sir, if ever I break my word with a gentleman, may I never read word at my need. Where shall I find you?

QUAR. Somewhere i' the Fair hereabouts: dispatch it quickly.> [*Exit* EDGWORTH.] I would fain see the careful fool deluded! Of all beasts, I love the serious ass; he that takes pains to be one, and plays the fool with the [1032 greatest diligence that can be.

GRACE. Then you would not choose, sir, but love my guardian, Justice Overdo, who is answerable to that description in every hair of him.

QUAR. So I have heard. But how came you, Mistress Wellborn, to be his ward, or have relation to him at first? [1040

GRACE. Faith, through a common calamity, he bought me, sir; and now he will marry me to his wife's brother, this wise gentleman that you see; or else I must pay value o' my land.

QUAR. 'Slid! is there no device of disparagement or so? Talk with some crafty fellow, some picklock o' the law. Would I had studied a year longer i' the Inns of Court, an't had been but i' your case. [1051

WINW. <Ay, Master Quarlous, are you proffering?>

GRACE. You'd bring but little aid, sir.

WINW. <I'll look to you, i' faith, gamester.> An unfortunate foolish tribe you are fallen into, lady; I wonder you can endure 'em.

GRACE. Sir, they that cannot work their fetters off must wear 'em. [1060

WINW. You see what care they have on you, to leave you thus.

GRACE. Faith, the same they have of themselves, sir. I cannot greatly complain if this were all the plea I had against 'em.

WINW. 'Tis true; but will you please to withdraw with us a little, and make them think they have lost you. I hope our manners ha' been such hitherto, and our language, as will give you no cause to doubt yourself in our company. [1072

GRACE. Sir, I will give myself no cause; I am so secure of mine own manners as I suspect not yours.

QUAR. Look where John Littlewit comes.

WINW. Away, I'll not be seen by him.

QUAR. No, you were not best; he'd tell his mother, the widow. [1079

WINW. Heart! what do you mean?

QUAR. Cry you mercy, is the wind there? must not the widow be named?

[*Exeunt.*

Enter LITTLEWIT *from* URSULA'S *booth, followed by* MRS. LITTLEWIT.

LIT. Do you hear, Win, Win?

MRS. LIT. What say you, John?

Lit. While they are paying the reckoning, Win, I'll tell you a thing, Win; we shall never see any sights i' the Fair, [1090 Win, except you long still, Win: good Win, sweet Win, long to see some hobby-horses, and some drums, and rattles, and dogs, and fine devices, Win. The bull with the five legs, Win; and the great hog. Now you ha' begun with pig, you may long for anything, Win, and so for my motion, Win.

Mrs. Lit. But we sha' not eat of the bull and the hog, John; how shall I long, then? [1101

Lit. O yes, Win: you may long to see as well as to taste, Win: how did the pothecary's wife, Win, that longed to see the anatomy, Win? or the lady, Win, that desired to spit i' the great lawyer's mouth, after an eloquent pleading? I assure you, they longed, Win; good Win, go in and long. [*Exeunt* Littlewit *and* Mrs. Littlewit. [1110

Trash. I think we are rid of our new customer, brother Leatherhead, we shall hear no more of him.

Leath. All the better; let's pack up all and begone, before he find us.

Trash. Stay a little, yonder comes a company; it may be we may take some more money.

Enter Knockhum *and* Busy *from the booth.* [1120

Knock. Sir, I will take your counsel, and cut my hair, and leave vapors: I see that tobacco, and bottle-ale, and pig, and Whit, and very Urs'la herself, is all vanity.

Busy. Only pig was not comprehended in my admonition, the rest were: for long hair, it is an ensign of pride, a banner; and the world is full of those banners, very full of banners. And bottle-ale [1130 is a drink of Satan's, a diet-drink of Satan's, devised to puff us up, and make us swell in this latter age of vanity; as the smoke of tobacco, to keep us in mist and error: but the fleshly woman, which you call Urs'la, is above all to be avoided, having the marks upon her of the three enemies of man; the world, as being in the Fair; the devil, as being in the fire; and the flesh, as being herself. [1140

Enter Mrs. Purecraft *from the booth.*

Pure. Brother Zeal-of-the-land! what shall we do? my daughter Win-the-fight is fallen into her fit of longing again.

Busy. For more pig! there is no more, is there?

Pure. To see some sights i' the Fair.

Busy. Sister, let her fly the impurity of the place swiftly, lest she partake of the pitch thereof.—Thou art the seat of the beast, O Smithfield, and I will leave thee! Idolatry peepeth out on [1152 every side of thee.

Knock. <An excellent right hypocrite! now his belly is full, he falls a-railing and kicking, the jade. A very good vapor! I'll in, and joy Urs'la, with telling how her pig works; two and a half he eat to his share; and he has drunk a pail-full. He eats with his eyes, as well as his [1160 teeth.> [*Returns into the booth.*

Leath. What do you lack, gentlemen? what is't you buy? rattles, drums, babies—

Busy. Peace, with thy apocryphal wares, thou profane publican; thy bells, thy dragons, and thy Tobie's dogs. Thy hobby-horse is an idol, a very idol, a fierce and rank idol; and thou the Nebuchadnezzar, the proud Nebuchadnezzar of the Fair, that sett'st it up, for children to fall down to, and worship. [1172

Leath. Cry you mercy, sir; will you buy a fiddle to fill up your noise?

Re-enter Littlewit *and his wife.*

Lit. Look, Win, do, look, a' God's name, and save your longing. Here be fine sights.

Pure. Ay, child, so you hate 'em, as our brother Zeal does, you may look on 'em. [1181

Leath. Or what do you say to a drum, sir?

Busy. It is the broken belly of the beast, and thy bellows there are his lungs, and these pipes are his throat, those

feathers are of his tail, and thy rattles the gnashing of his teeth.

TRASH. And what's my gingerbread, I pray you? [1190

BUSY. The provender that pricks him up. Hence with thy basket of popery, thy nest of images, and whole legend of ginger-work.

LEATH. Sir, if you be not quiet the quicklier, I'll ha' you clapped fairly by the heels, for disturbing the Fair.

BUSY. The sin of the Fair provokes me; I cannot be silent.

PURE. Good brother Zeal! [1200

LEATH. Sir, I'll make you silent, believe it.

LIT. <I'd give a shilling you could, i' faith, friend.

LEATH. Sir, give me your shilling, I'll give you my shop, if I do not; and I'll leave it in pawn with you i' the meantime.

LIT. A match, i' faith; but do it quickly then.> [*Exit* LEATHERHEAD. [1210

BUSY, *to* MRS. PURECRAFT, *who has been trying to pacify him.* Hinder me not, woman. I was moved in spirit, to be here this day, in this Fair, this wicked and foul Fair (and fitter may it be called a Foul than a Fair); to protest against the abuses of it, the foul abuses of it, in regard of the afflicted saints, that are troubled, very much troubled, exceedingly troubled, with the opening of [1220 the merchandise of Babylon again, and the peeping of popery upon the stalls here, here, in the high places. See you not Goldylocks, the purple strumpet there, in her yellow gown and green sleeves? the profane pipes, the tinkling timbrels? a shop of reliques! [*Attempts to seize the toys.*

LIT. Pray you forbear, I am put in trust with 'em. [1230

BUSY. And this idolatrous grove of images, this flasket of idols, which I will pull down— [*Overthrows the gingerbread basket.*

TRASH. O my ware, my ware! God bless it!

BUSY. In my zeal, and glory to be thus exercised.

Re-enter LEATHERHEAD, *with* BRISTLE *and* HAGGISE. [1240

LEATH. Here he is, pray you lay hold on his zeal; we cannot sell a whistle for him in tune. Stop his noise first.

BUSY. Thou canst not; 'tis a sanctified noise. I will make a loud and most strong noise, till I have daunted the profane enemy. And for this cause—

LEATH. Sir, here's no man afraid of you, or your cause. You shall swear it i' the stocks, sir. [1250

BUSY. I will thrust myself into the stocks, upon the pikes of the land.

[BRISTLE *and* HAGGISE *seize him.*

LEATH. Carry him away.

PURE. What do you mean, wicked men?

BUSY. Let them alone, I fear them not. [*Exeunt Officers with* BUSY, *followed by* DAME PURECRAFT. [1258

LIT. Was not this shilling well ventured, Win, for our liberty? now we may go play, and see over the Fair, where we list ourselves: my mother is gone after him, and let her e'en go, and lose us.

MRS. LIT. Yes, John; but I know not what to do.

LIT. For what, Win?

MRS. LIT. For a thing I am ashamed to tell you, i' faith; and 'tis too far to go home. [1269

LIT. I pray thee be not ashamed, Win. Come, i' faith, thou shalt not be ashamed: is it anything about the hobby-horse man? an't be, speak freely.

MRS. LIT. Hang him, base Bobchin, I scorn him; no, I have very great what sha' call 'um, John. [*Whispers to him.*

LIT. O, is that all, Win? we'll go back to Captain Jordan, to the pig-woman's, Win, he'll help us, or she, with a dripping-pan, or an old kettle, or something. [1280 The poor greasy soul loves you, Win; and after we'll visit the Fair all over, Win, and see my puppet-play, Win; you know it's a fine matter, Win. [*They go into* URSULA'S *booth.*

LEATH. Let's away: I counselled you to pack up afore, Joan.

TRASH. A pox of his Bedlam purity! He has spoiled half my ware: but the best is, we lose nothing if we miss our first merchant. [1291

LEATH. It shall be hard for him to find or know us, when we are translated, Joan. [*Exeunt.*

ACT FOUR

SCENE I

The stocks are set up at the back of URSULA'S *booth. They are capable of holding three malefactors. Here, only a few moments later,* BRISTLE *and* HAGGISE *enter with* OVERDO *(in custody).* COKES *has joined them, to have the pleasure of seeing* OVERDO *put in the stocks.*

The author seems to have got somewhat mixed here, since BRISTLE *and* HAGGISE *arrested* BUSY, *not* OVERDO. *Pre-* [10 *sumably* OVERDO *also has been handed over to them, and they have come on with him, leaving others to bring on* BUSY.

They are followed by TROUBLEALL, *a demented creature, with an absurd veneration for* JUSTICE OVERDO.

TRO. My masters, I do make no doubt but you are officers.

BRI. What then, sir?

TRO. And the king's loving and obedient subjects. [21

BRI. Obedient, friend! take heed what you speak, I advise you; Oliver Bristle advises you. His loving subjects, we grant you; but not his obedient, at this time, by your leave; we know ourselves a little better than so; we are to command, sir, and such as you are to be obedient. Here's one of his obedient subjects going to the stocks; and we'll [30 make you such another, if you talk.

TRO. You are all wise enough i' your places, I know.

BRI. If you know it, sir, why do you bring it in question?

TRO. I question nothing, pardon me. I do only hope you have warrant for what you do, and so quit you, and so multiply you. [*Exit.* [39

HAG. What's he?—Bring him up to the stocks there. Why bring you him not up? [OVERDO *is brought forward by* BRISTLE.

Re-enter TROUBLEALL.

TRO. If you have Justice Overdo's warrant, 'tis well; you are safe: that is the warrant of warrants. I'll not give this button for any man's warrant else.

BRI. Like enough, sir; but let me tell you, an you play away your buttons thus, you will want them ere night, for any store I see about you; you might keep 'em, and save pins, I wuss. [*Exit* [52 TROUBLEALL.

OVER. <What should he be, that doth so esteem and advance my warrant? he seems a sober and discreet person. It is a comfort to a good conscience to be followed with a good fame in his sufferings. The world will have a pretty taste by this, how I can bear adversity; and it [60 will beget a kind of reverence toward me hereafter, even from mine enemies, when they shall see I carry my calamity nobly, and that it doth neither break me nor bend me.>

HAG. Come, sir, here's a place for you to preach in. Will you put in your leg?

OVER. That I will, cheerfully. [*He is put in the stocks.* [69

BRI. O' my conscience, a seminary![1] he kisses the stocks.

COKES. Well, my masters, I'll leave him with you; now I see him bestowed, I'll go look for my goods and Numps.

HAG. You may, sir, I warrant you.—Where's the t'other bawler? fetch him too.—You shall find 'em both fast enough. [*Exit* COKES.

OVER. <In the midst of this tumult, I will yet be the author of mine own rest, and, not minding their fury, sit in the stocks in that calm as shall be able to [82 trouble a triumph.>

Re-enter TROUBLEALL.

TRO. Do you assure me upon your words? May I undertake for you, if I be asked the question, that you have this warrant?

[1] *I.e.*, a Romish priest from the Continent.

HAG. What's this fellow, for God's sake? [90

TRO. Do but show me Adam Overdo, and I am satisfied. [*Exit.*

BRI. He is a fellow that is distracted, they say; one Troubleall: he was an officer in the court of pie-pouldres here last year, and put out on his place by Justice Overdo.

OVER. <Ha!> [98

BRI. Upon which he took an idle conceit, and is run mad upon't: so that ever since he will do nothing but by Justice Overdo's warrant; he will not eat a crust, nor drink a little, nor make him in his apparel ready. His wife, sir reverence, cannot get him make his water, or shift his shirt, without his warrant.

OVER. <If this be true, this is my greatest disaster. How am I bound to satisfy this poor man, that is of so good a nature to me, out of his wits! where there is no room left for dissembling.>

Re-enter TROUBLEALL. [112

TRO. If you cannot show me Adam Overdo, I am in doubt of you; I am afraid you cannot answer it. [*Exit.*

HAG. Before me, neighbor Bristle—and now I think on't better—Justice Overdo is a very parantory person.

BRI. O, are you advised of that! and a severe justicer, by your leave. [120

OVER. <Do I hear ill o' that side too?>

BRI. He will sit as upright o' the bench, an you mark him, as a candle i' the socket, and give light to the whole court in every business.

HAG. But he will burn blue, and swell like a boil, God bless us, an he be angry.

BRI. Ay, and he will be angry too, when he lists, that's more; and, when he is angry, be it right or wrong, he has the law on's side ever: I mark that too. [132

OVER. <I will be more tender hereafter. I see compassion may become a justice, though it be a weakness, I confess, and nearer a vice than a virtue.>

HAG. Well, take him out o' the stocks again; we'll go a sure way to work; we'll ha' the ace o' hearts o' our side, if we can. [*They take* OVERDO *out.* [140

Enter POCHER, *and Officers with* BUSY, *followed by* MRS. PURECRAFT.

POCH. Come, bring him away to his fellow there.—Master Busy, we shall rule your legs, I hope, though we cannot rule your tongue.

BUSY. No, minister of darkness, no; thou canst not rule my tongue; my tongue it is mine own, and with it I will both knock and mock down your Bartholomew abominations, till you be made a hissing to the neighboring parishes [152 round about.

HAG. Let him alone; we have devised better upon't.

PURE. And shall he not into the stocks, then?

BRI. No, mistress, we'll have 'em both to Justice Overdo, and let him do over 'em as is fitting; then I, and my gos- [160 sip Haggise, and my beadle Pocher are discharged.

PURE. O, I thank you, blessed honest men!

BRI. Nay, never thank us; but thank this madman that comes here; he put it in our heads.

Re-enter TROUBLEALL. [168

PURE. Is he mad? now heaven increase his madness, and bless it, and thank it!—Sir, your poor hand-maid thanks you.

TRO. Have you a warrant? an you have a warrant, show it.

PURE. Yes, I have a warrant out of the word, to give thanks for removing any scorn intended to the brethren. [*Exeunt all but* TROUBLEALL.

TRO. It is Justice Overdo's warrant that I look for; if you have not that, keep your word; I'll keep mine. Quit ye, and multiply ye. [181

Enter EDGWORTH *and* NIGHTINGALE.

EDG. Come away, Nightingale, I pray thee.

TRO. Whither go you? where's your warrant?

EDG. Warrant! for what, sir?

TRO. For what you go about, you know how fit it is; an you have no warrant, bless you, I'll pray for you, that's all [190 I can do. [*Exit.*

EDG. What means he?

NIGHT. A madman that haunts the Fair; do you not know him? It's marvel he has not more followers after his ragged heels.

EDG. Beshrew him, he startled me. I thought he had known of our plot. Guilt's a terrible thing. Ha' you prepared the costardmonger? [200

NIGHT. Yes, and agreed for his basket of pears; he is at the corner here, ready. And your prize, he comes down sailing that way all alone, without his protector; he is rid of him, it seems.

EDG. Ay, I know; I should ha' followed his protectorship, for a feat I am to do upon him: but this offered itself so i' the way, I could not let it scape: here he comes; whistle; be this sport called Dorring the Dottrel. [211

Re-enter COKES.

NIGHT, *whistling*. Wh, wh, wh, wh, &c.

COKES. By this light, I cannot find my gingerbread wife, nor my hobby-horse man, in all the Fair now, to ha' my money again: and I do not know the way out on't, to go home for more. Do you hear, friend, you that whistle? what tune is that you whistle? [220

NIGHT. A new tune I am practising, sir.

COKES. Dost thou know where I dwell, I pray thee? nay, on with thy tune; I ha' no such haste for an answer: I'll practise with thee.

Enter COSTARDMONGER *with a basket of pears.*

COS. Buy any pears, very fine pears, pears fine! [NIGHTINGALE *sets his foot before him, and he falls with his basket.*

COKES. Gods-so, a muss, a muss, a muss, a muss! [232

[*Falls a-scrambling for the pears.*

COS. Good gentlemen, my ware, my ware; I am a poor man. Good sir, my ware.

NIGHT. *to* COKES. Let me hold your sword, sir, it troubles you.

COKES. Do, and my cloak, an thou wilt, and my hat too. [240

EDG. A delicate great boy! methinks he out-scrambles 'em all. I cannot persuade myself but he goes to grammar-school yet, and plays the truant to-day.

NIGHT. <Would he had another purse to cut, Zekiel.

EDG. Purse! a man might cut out his kidneys, I think, and he never feel 'em, he is so earnest at the sport.

NIGHT. His soul is half-way out [250 on's body at the game.

EDG. Away, Nightingale; that way.>

[NIGHTINGALE *runs off with his sword, cloak, and hat.*

COKES. I think I am furnished for cather'ne pears, for one undermeal. Gi' me my cloak.

COS. Good gentleman, give me my ware. [259

COKES. Where's the fellow I ga' my cloak to? my cloak and my hat? ha! God's lid! is he gone? thieves, thieves! help me to cry, gentlemen. [*Rushes away.*

EDG. Away, costardmonger, come to us to Urs'la's. [*Exit* COSTARDMONGER.] Talk of him to have a soul! 'heart, if he have any more than a thing given him instead of salt, only to keep him from stinking, I'll be hanged afore my time presently: where should it be, trow? in his blood? he has not so much toward [271 it in his whole body as will maintain a good flea! and if he take this course, he will not ha' so much land left as to rear a calf, within this twelvemonth. Was there ever green plover so pulled! That his little overseer had been here now, and been but tall enough to see him steal pears, in exchange for his beaver hat and his cloak thus! I must go find him [280 out next, for his black box, and his patent, it seems, he has of his place; which I think the gentleman would have a reversion of, that spoke to me for it so earnestly. [*Exit.*

Scene II

Cokes has not gone very far and now stops running, being out of breath. He has been unable to find Nightingale, *and is disgusted with his experiences in the Fair.*

Cokes. Would I might lose my doublet, and hose too, as I am an honest man, and never stir, if I think there be anything but thieving and coz'ning in this whole Fair. Bartholomew Fair, quoth [10 he! an ever any Bartholomew had that luck in't that I have had, I'll be martyred for him, and in Smithfield too. I ha' paid for my pears, a rot on 'em! I'll keep 'em no longer; [*throws away his pears*] you were choke-pears to me. I had been better ha' gone to mum-chance for you, I wuss. Methinks the Fair should not have used me thus, an 'twere but for my name's sake. I would not ha' used a dog o' the name so. O, Numps will triumph now! [22

Enter Troubleall.

Friend, do you know who I am, or where I lie? I do not myself, I'll be sworn. Do but carry me home, and I'll please thee; I ha' money enough there. I ha' lost myself, and my cloak, and my hat, and my fine sword, and my sister, and Numps, and Mistress Grace, a gentlewoman that I should have married, and a cutwork [31 handkercher she ga' me, and two purses, to-day; and my bargain of hobby-horses and gingerbread, which grieves me worst of all.

Tro. By whose warrant, sir, have you done all this?

Cokes. Warrant! thou art a wise fellow indeed; as if a man need a warrant to lose anything with. [40

Tro. Yes, Justice Overdo's warrant, a man may get and lose with, I'll stand to't.

Cokes. Justice Overdo! dost thou know him? I lie there; he is my brother-in-law; he married my sister: pray thee show me the way; dost thou know the house?

Tro. Sir, show me your warrant: I know nothing without a warrant, pardon me. [50

Cokes. Why, I warrant thee; come along: thou shalt see I have wrought pillows there, and cambric sheets, and sweet bags too. Pray thee guide me to the house.

Tro. Sir, I'll tell you; go you thither yourself first alone, tell your worshipful brother your mind, and but bring me three lines of his hand, or his clerk's, with Adam Overdo underneath (here I'll stay you), I'll obey you, and I'll guide you presently. [62

Cokes. 'Slid! this is an ass, I have found him: pox upon me, what do I talking to such a dull fool? farewell! you are a very coxcomb, do you hear? [*Exit.*

Tro. I think I am; if Justice Overdo sign to it, I am, and so we are all: he'll quit us all, multiply us all.

Scene III

The scene is again the back of Ursula's *booth, where the stocks stand.* Quarlous *and* Winwife *are now quarrelling over* Grace. *To her great consternation, they have drawn their swords.*

Grace. Gentlemen, this is no way that you take; you do but breed one another trouble and offence, and give me no contentment at all. I am no she that affects to be quarrelled for or have my name [10 or fortune made the question of men's swords.

Quar. 'Sblood, we love you!

Grace. If you both love me, as you pretend, your own reason will tell you but one can enjoy me: and to that point there leads a directer line than by my infamy, which must follow if you fight. 'Tis true, I have professed it to you in- [19 genuously, that, rather than to be yoked with this bridegroom is appointed me, I would take up any husband almost upon any trust; though subtlety would say to me, I know, he is a fool, and has an estate, and I might govern him, and enjoy a friend beside; but these are not my aims. I must have a husband I love, or I can-

not live with him. I shall ill make one of these politic wives. [29

WINW. Why, if you can like either of us, lady, say which is he, and the other shall swear instantly to desist.

QUAR. Content, I accord to that willingly.

GRACE. Sure you think me a woman of an extreme levity, gentlemen, or a strange fancy, that, meeting you by chance in such a place as this, both at one instant, and not yet of two hours' acquaintance, neither of you deserving [40 afore the other of me, I should so forsake my modesty (though I might affect one more particularly) as to say, this is he, and name him.

QUAR. Why, wherefore should you not? What should hinder you?

GRACE. If you would not give it to my modesty, allow it yet to my wit; give me so much of woman and cunning as not to betray myself impertinently. How [50 can I judge of you, so far as to a choice, without knowing you more? You are both equal, and alike to me yet, and so indifferently affected by me, as each of you might be the man, if the other were away: for you are reasonable creatures, you have understanding and discourse; and, if fate send me an understanding husband, I have no fear at all but mine own manners shall make him a good one.

QUAR. Would I were put forth to making for you then. [62

GRACE. It may be you are, you know not what's toward you: will you consent to a motion of mine, gentlemen?

WINW. Whatever it be, we'll presume reasonableness, coming from you.

QUAR. And fitness too.

GRACE. I saw one of you buy a pair of tables e'en now. [70

WINW. Yes, here they be, and maiden ones too, unwritten in.

GRACE. The fitter for what they may be employed in. You shall write either of you here a word or a name, what you like best, but of two or three syllables at most; and the next person that comes this way, because Destiny has a high hand in business of this nature, I'll demand which of the two words he or she doth approve, and according to that sentence fix my resolution and affection [82 without change.

QUAR. Agreed; my word is conceived already.

WINW. And mine shall not be long creating after.

GRACE. But you shall promise, gentlemen, not to be curious to know which of you it is, taken; but give me leave to conceal that till you have brought me either home or where I may safely [92 tender myself.

WINW. Why, that's but equal.

QUAR. We are pleased.

GRACE. Because I will bind both your endeavors to work together friendly and jointly each to the other's fortune, and have myself fitted with some means to make him that is forsaken a part of [100 amends.

QUAR. These conditions are very courteous. Well, my word is out of the "Arcadia" then; *Argalus*.

WINW. And mine out of the play; *Palemon*. [*They write.*

Enter TROUBLEALL.

TRO. Have you any warrant for this, gentlemen?

QUAR. AND WINW. Ha! [110

TRO. There must be a warrant had, believe it.

WINW. For what?

TRO. For whatsoever it is, anything indeed, no matter what.

QUAR. 'Slight! here's a fine ragged prophet dropped down i' the nick!

TRO., *going*. Heaven quit you, gentlemen!

QUAR. Nay, stay a little: good lady, put him to the question. [121

GRACE. You are content then?

WINW. AND QUAR. Yes, yes.

GRACE. Sir, here are two names written—

TRO. Is Justice Overdo one?

GRACE. How, sir! I pray you read 'em to yourself; it is for a wager between

these gentlemen; and with a stroke or any difference mark which you ap- [130
prove best.

Tro. They may be both worshipful names for aught I know, mistress; but Adam Overdo had been worth three of them, I assure you, in this place; that's in plain English.

Grace. This man amazes me. I pray you like one of 'em, sir. [138

Tro., *marking the book*. I do like him there, that has the best warrant, mistress, to save your longing, and (multiply him) it may be this. But I am still for Justice Overdo, that's my conscience; and quit you.

Winw. Is't done, lady?

Grace. Ay, and strangely as ever I saw: what fellow is this, trow?

Quar. No matter what, a fortune-teller we ha' made him: which is't, which is't?

Grace. Nay, did you not promise [150
not to inquire?

Enter Edgworth.

Quar. 'Slid, I forgot that! pray you pardon me.—Look, here's our Mercury come; the license arrives i' the finest time too! 'tis but scraping out Cokes his name, and 'tis done.

Winw. How now, lime-twig, hast thou touched? [159

Edg. Not yet, sir; except you would go with me and see't, it's not worth speaking on. The act is nothing without a witness. Yonder he is, your man with the box, fallen into the finest company, and so transported with vapors! they ha' got in a northern clothier, and one Puppy, a western man, that's come to wrestle before my Lord Mayor anon, and Captain Whit, and one Val Cutting, that helps Captain Jordan to roar, a circling [170
boy; with whom your Numps is so taken that you may strip him of his clothes, if you will. I'll undertake to geld him for you, if you had but a surgeon ready to sear him. And Mistress Justice there is the goodest woman! she does so love them all over in terms of justice and the style of authority, with her hood upright, that I beseech you come away, gentlemen, and see't. [180

Quar. 'Slight, I would not lose it for the Fair; what'll you do, Ned?

Winw. Why, stay hereabout for you: Mistress Wellborn must not be seen.

Quar. Do so, and find out a priest i' the meantime; I'll bring the license.—Lead; which way is't?

Edg. Here, sir, you are o' the backside o' the booth already; you may hear the noise. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV

Knockhum, Whit, Nordern, Puppy, Cutting, Waspe, *and* Mrs. Overdo *are discovered in* Ursula's *booth, all of them much the worse for* Ursula's *liquor.*

Knock. <Whit, bid Val Cutting continue the vapors for a lift, Whit, for a lift.>

Nor. I'll ne mare, I'll ne mare; the eale's too meeghty. [9

Knock. How now! my galloway nag, the staggers, ha! Whit, gi' him a slit i' the forehead. Cheer up, man; a needle and thread to stitch his ears. I'd cure him now, an I had it, with a little butter and garlic, long pepper and grains. Where's my horn? I'll gi' him a mash presently, shall take away this dizziness.

Pup. Why, where are you, zurs? do you vlinch, and leave us i' the zuds now?

Nor. I'll ne mare, I is e'en as vull as a paiper's bag, by my troth, I. [21

Pup. Do my northern cloth zhrink i' the wetting, ha?

Knock. Why, well said, old flea-bitten; thou'lt never tire, I see.[2] [*They fall to their vapors again, their amusement consisting of contradicting the last speaker.*

Cut. No, sir, but he may tire if it please him.

Whit. Who told dee sho, that he [30
would never teer, man?

Cut. No matter who told him so, so long as he knows.

Knock. Nay, I know nothing, sir, pardon me there.

[2] an allusion to the proverb, "A flea-bitten horse never tires."

Enter EDGWORTH *and* QUARLOUS.

EDG. *to* QUARLOUS. <They are at it still, sir; this they call vapors.>

WHIT. He shall not pardon dee, captain; dou shalt not be pardoned. Pre'-dee, shweetheart, do not pardon him. [41

CUT. 'Slight, I'll pardon him, an I list, whosoever says "nay" to't.

QUAR. <Where's Numps? I miss him.>

WASPE. Why, I say "nay" to't.

QUAR. <O, there he is.>

KNOCK. To what do you say "nay," sir?

WASPE. To anything, whatsoever it [50 is, so long as I do not like it.

WHIT. Pardon me, little man, dou musht like it a little.

CUT. No, he must not like it at all, sir; there you are i' the wrong.

WHIT. I tink I be: he musht not like it indeed.

CUT. Nay, then he both must and will like it, sir, for all you.

KNOCK. If he have reason, he may like it, sir. [61

WHIT. By no meensh, captain, upon reason, he may like nothing upon reason.

WASPE. I have no reason, nor I will hear of no reason, nor I will look for no reason, and he is an ass that either knows any, or looks for't from me.

CUT. Yes, in some sense you may have reason, sir.

WASPE. Ay, in some sense, I care [70 not if I grant you.

WHIT. Pardon me, thou oughtsht to grant him nothing in no shensh, if dou do love dyshelf, angry man.

WASPE. Why then, I do grant him nothing: and I have no sense.

CUT. 'Tis true, thou hast no sense indeed.

WASPE. 'Slid, but I have sense, now I think on't better, and I will grant him anything, do you see. [81

KNOCK. He is i' the right, and does utter a sufficient vapor.

CUT. Nay, it is no sufficient vapor neither. I deny that.

KNOCK. Then it is a sweet vapor.

CUT. It may be a sweet vapor.

WASPE. Nay, it is no sweet vapor neither, sir; it stinks, and I'll stand to't.

WHIT. Yes, I tink it dosh shtink, captain: all vapor dosh shtink. [91

WASPE. Nay, then it does not stink, sir, and it shall not stink.

CUT. By your leave, it may, sir.

WASPE. Ay, by my leave it may stink, I know that.

WHIT. Pardon me, thou knowesht nothing; it cannot by thy leave, angry man.

WASPE. How can it not?

KNOCK. Nay, never question him, for he is i' the right. [101

WHIT. Yesh, I am i' de right, I confesh it, so ish de little man too.

WASPE. I'll have nothing confessed that concerns me. I am not i' the right, nor never was i' the right, nor never will be i' the right, while I am in my right mind.

CUT. Mind! why, here's no man minds you, sir, nor anything else. [*They drink again.* [110

PUP. Vriend, will you mind this that we do? [*Offers* NORDERN *drink.*

QUAR. <Call you this vapors! this is such belching of quarrel as I never heard. Will you mind your business, sir?

EDG. You shall see, sir.> [*Goes up to* WASPE.

NOR. I'll ne mare, my waimb warkes too mickle with this auready.

EDG. Will you take that, Master Waspe, that nobody should mind you? [121

WASPE. Why, what ha' you to do? is't any matter to you?

EDG. No, but methinks you should not be unminded, though.

WASPE. Nor I wu' not be, now I think on't.—Do you hear, new acquaintance? does no man mind me, say you?

CUT. Yes, sir, every man here minds you; but how? [130

WASPE. Nay, I care as little how as you do; that was not my question.

WHIT. No, nothing was ty question; tou art a learned man, and I am a valiant man, i' faith la; tou shalt speak for me, and I will fight for tee.

KNOCK. Fight for him, Whit! a gross vapor! he can fight for himself.

WASPE. It may be I can, but it may be I wu' not; how then? [140

CUT. Why, then you may choose.

WASPE. Why, then I'll choose whether I choose or no.

KNOCK. I think you may, and 'tis true; and I allow it for a resolute vapor.

WASPE. Nay then, I do think you do not think, and it is no resolute vapor.

CUT. Yes, in some sort he may allow you. [149

KNOCK. In no sort, sir, pardon me, I can allow him nothing. You mistake the vapor.

WASPE. He mistakes nothing, sir, in no sort.

WHIT. Yes, I pre dee now, let him mistake.

WASPE. A turd i' your teeth! never predee me, for I will have nothing mistaken.

KNOCK. Turd! ha, turd? a noisome vapor: strike, Whit. [WHIT *and* WASPE *scuffle, while* EDGWORTH *steals the license out of the box, and exit.* [162

MRS. OVER. Why, gentlemen, why, gentlemen, I charge you upon my authority, conserve the peace. In the king's name, and my husband's, put up your weapons; I shall be driven to commit you myself else.

QUAR. Ha, ha, ha!

WASPE. Why do you laugh, sir? [170

QUAR. Sir, you'll allow me my Christian liberty. I may laugh, I hope.

CUT. In some sort you may, and in some sort you may not, sir.

KNOCK. Nay, in some sort, sir, he may neither laugh nor hope in this company.

WASPE. Yes, then he may both laugh and hope in any sort, an't please him.

QUAR. Faith, and I will then, for it doth please me exceedingly. [180

WASPE. No exceeding neither, sir.

KNOCK. No, that vapor is too lofty.

QUAR. Gentlemen, I do not play well at your game of vapors; I am not very good at it; but—

CUT., *drawing a circle on the ground.* Do you hear, sir? I would speak with you in circle.

QUAR. In circle, sir! what would you with me in circle? [190

CUT. Can you lend me a piece, a Jacobus, in circle?

QUAR. 'Slid! your circle will prove more costly than your vapors, then. Sir, no, I lend you none.

CUT. Your beard's not well turned up, sir.

QUAR. How, rascal! are you playing with my beard? I'll break circle with you. [*They draw and fight.* [200

PUP. AND NOR. Gentlemen, gentlemen!

KNOCK., *to* WHIT. <Gather up, Whit, gather up, Whit, good vapors. [*Exit, while* WHIT *takes up the cloaks of the quarrellers and hides them.*

MRS. OVER. What mean you? are you rebels, gentlemen? shall I send out a sergeant-at-arms, or a writ of rebellion against you? I'll commit you, upon my womanhood, for a riot; upon my justice-hood, if you persist. [*Exeunt* QUARLOUS *and* CUTTING. [212

WASPE. Upon your justice-hood! marry shite o' your hood: you'll commit! spoke like a true justice of peace's wife indeed, and a fine female lawyer! turd i' your teeth for a fee, now.

MRS. OVER. Why, Numps, in Master Overdo's name I charge you.

WASPE. Good Mistress Underdo, [220 hold your tongue.

MRS. OVER. Alas, poor Numps!

WASPE. Alas! and why *alas* from you, I beseech you? or why *poor* Numps, goody Rich? Am I come to be pitied by your tuft-taffata now? Why, mistress, I knew Adam the clerk, your husband, when he was Adam Scrivener, and writ for twopence a sheet, as high as he bears his head now, or you your hood, dame—

Enter BRISTLE *and others of the Watch.*

What are you, sir? [232

BRI. We be men, and no infidels; what is the matter here, and the noises, can you tell?

WASPE. Heart, what ha' you to do? cannot a man quarrel in quietness, but he

must be put out on't by you? what are you?

Bri. Why, we be his majesty's [240 watch, sir.

Waspe. Watch! 'sblood, you are a sweet watch indeed. A body would think, an you watched well a-nights, you should be contented to sleep at this time o' day. Get you to your fleas and your flock-beds, you rogues, your kennels, and lie down close.

Bri. Down! yes, we will down, I warrant you.—Down with him; in his majesty's name, down, down with him, and carry him away to the pigeon-holes. [252 [*Some of the Watch seize* Waspe, *and carry him off.*

Mrs. Over. I thank you, honest friends, in the behalf o' the crown, and the peace, and in Master Overdo's name, for suppressing enormities.

Whit. Stay, Bristle, here ish an- [259 oder brashe o' drunkards, but very quiet, special drunkards, will pay de five shillings very well. [*Points to* Nordern *and* Puppy, *drunk and asleep on the bench.*] Take 'em to dee, in de graishe o' God; one of 'em does change cloth for ale in the Fair here; te toder ish a strong man, a mighty man, my Lord Mayor's man, and a wrastler. He has wrastled so long with the bottle here, that the man with the beard hash almosht streek up his [270 heelsh.

Bri. 'Slid, the clerk o' the market has been to cry him all the Fair over here, for my lord's service.

Whit. Tere he ish; pre dee take him henshe, and make ty best on him. [*Exeunt* Bristle *and the rest of the Watch with* Nordern *and* Puppy.]—How now, woman o' shilk, vot ailsh ty shweet fashe? art tou melancholy? [280

Mrs. Over. A little distempered with these enormities. Shall I entreat a courtesy of you, captain?

Whit. Entreat a hundred, velvet voman, I vill do it, shpeak out.

Mrs. Over. I cannot with modesty speak it out; but— [*Whispers to him.*

Whit. I vill do it, and more and more, for dee. What, Urs'la, an't be bitch, an't be bawd, an't be! [290

Enter Ursula *from inner room.*

Urs. How now, rascal; what roar you for, old pimp?

Whit. <Here, put de cloaks, Ursh; de purchase.> Pre dee now, shweet Ursh, help dis good brave voman to a jordan, an't be.

Urs. 'Slid, call your Captain Jordan to her, can you not? [299

Whit. Nay, pre dee leave dy consheits, and bring the velvet woman to de—

Urs. I bring her! hang her: heart, must I find a common pot for every punk in your purlieus?

Whit. O, good voordsh, Ursh, it ish a guest o' velvet, i' fait la.

Urs. Let her sell her hood, and buy a sponge, with a pox to her! my vessel is employed, sir. I have but one, and 'tis the bottom of an old bottle. An honest proctor and his wife are at it within; [312 if she'll stay her time, so. [*Goes within.*

Whit. As soon ash tou cansht, shweet Ursh. Of a valiant man I tink I am te patientsh man i' the world, or in all Smithfield.

Re-enter Knockhum.

Knock. How now, Whit! close vapors, stealing your leaps! covering in [320 corners, ha!

Whit. No, fait, captain, dough tou beesht a vishe man, dy vit is a mile hence now. I was procuring a shmall courtesie for a woman of fashion here.

Mrs. Over. Yes, captain, though I am a justice of peace's wife, I do love men of war and the sons of the sword, when they come before my husband. [329

Knock. Say'st thou so, filly? thou shalt have a leap presently; I'll horse thee myself else.

Urs., *within.* Come, will you bring her in now, and let her take her turn?

Whit. Gramercy, good Ursh, I tank de.

Mrs. Over. Master Overdo shall thank her. [*Exit.*

Re-enter URSULA, *followed by* LITTLEWIT *and* MRS. LITTLEWIT. [339

LIT. Good ga'mere Urs, Win and I are exceedingly beholden to you, and to Captain Jordan and Captain Whit.—Win, I'll be bold to leave you in this good company, Win, for half an hour or so, Win, while I go and see how my matter goes forward, and if the puppets be perfect; and then I'll come and fetch you, Win.

MRS. LIT. Will you leave me alone with two men, John?

LIT. Ay, they are honest gentle- [350 men, Win, Captain Jordan and Captain Whit; they'll use you very civilly, Win. God b' w' you, Win. [*Exit.*

URS. <What, is her husband gone?

KNOCK. On his false gallop, Urs, away.

URS. An you be right Bartholomew birds, now show yourselves so: we are undone for want of fowl i' the Fair here. Here will be Zekiel Edgworth, and three or four gallants with him at night, and I have neither plover nor quail for them: persuade this between you two, to [362 become a bird o' the game, while I work the velvet woman within, as you call her.

KNOCK. I conceive thee, Urs: go thy ways.> [*Exit* URSULA *to the back of the booth.*] Dost thou hear, Whit? is't not pity my delicate dark chestnut here, with the fine lean head, large forehead, round eyes, even mouth, sharp ears, long neck, thin crest, close withers, plain back, deep sides, short fillets, and full flanks; [372 with a round belly, a plump buttock, large thighs, knit knees, straight legs, short pasterns, smooth hoofs, and short heels, should lead a dull honest woman's life, that might live the life of a lady?

WHIT. Yes, by my fait and trot it is, captain; de honesht woman's life is a scurvy dull life indeed, la. [380

MRS. LIT. How, sir, is an honest woman's life a scurvy life?

WHIT. Yes, fait, shweetheart, believe him, de leefe of a bond-woman! but if dou vilt hearken to me, I vill make tee a free woman and a lady; dou shalt live like a lady, as te captain saysh.

KNOCK. Ay, and be honest too sometimes; have her wires and her tires, her green gowns and velvet petticoats. [390

WHIT. Ay, and ride to Ware and Rumford i' dy coash, shee de players, be in love vit 'em, sup vit gallantsh, be drunk, and cost dee nothing.

KNOCK. Brave vapors!

WHIT. And lie by twenty on 'em, if dou pleash, shweetheart.

MRS. LIT. What, and be honest still! that were fine sport. [399

WHIT. 'Tish common, shweetheart, tou may'st do it, by my hand: it shall be justified to ty husband's fashe now: tou shalt be as honesht as the skin between his hornsh, la.

KNOCK. Yes, and wear a dressing, top and top-gallant, to compare with e'er a husband on 'em all, for a foretop: it is the vapor of spirit in the wife to cuckold nowadays, as it is the vapor of fashion in the husband not to suspect. Your prying cat-eyed citizen is an abominable vapor. [412

MRS. LIT. Lord, what a fool have I been!

WHIT. Mend then, and do everyting like a lady hereafter; never know ty husband from another man.

KNOCK. Nor any one man from another, but i' the dark.

WHIT. Ay, and then it ish no dis- [420 grashe to know any man.

URS., *within.* Help, help, here!

KNOCK. How now? what vapor's there?

Re-enter URSULA.

URS. O, you are a sweet ranger, and look well to your walks! Yonder is your punk of Turnbull, ramping Alice, has fallen upon the poor gentlewoman within, and pulled her hood over her ears, and her hair through it. [431

MRS. OVERDO *rushes in from the back of the booth, followed by* ALICE, *who is beating her.*

MRS. OVER. Help, help, in the king's name!

ALICE. A mischief on you, they are such

as you are that undo us and take our trade from us, with your tuft-taffata haunches. [440

KNOCK. How now, Alice!

ALICE. The poor common whores can ha' no traffic for the privy rich ones; your caps and hoods of velvet call away our customers, and lick the fat from us.

URS. Peace, you foul ramping jade, you—

ALICE. Od's foot, you bawd in grease, are you talking?

KNOCK. Why, Alice, I say! [450

ALICE. Thou sow of Smithfield, thou!

URS. Thou tripe of Turnbull!

KNOCK. Cat-a-mountain vapors, ha!

URS. You know where you were tawed lately; both lashed and slashed you were in Bridewell.

ALICE. Ay, by the same token, you rid[3] that week, and broke out the bottom of the cart, night-tub.

KNOCK. Why, lion face, ha! do [460 you know who I am? shall I tear ruff, slit waistcoat, make rags of petticoat, ha! go to, vanish, for fear of vapors. Whit, a kick, Whit, in the parting vapor. [*They kick* ALICE *out.*] Come, brave woman, take a good heart, thou shalt be a lady too.

WHIT. Yes, fait, dey shall all both be ladies, and write madam: I vill do't myself for dem. Do is the vord, and D is the middle letter of madam, DD, put 'em together, and make deeds, with- [472 out which all words are alike, la!

KNOCK. 'Tis true: Ursula, take 'em in, open thy wardrope, and fit 'em to their calling. Green gowns, crimson petticoats, green women, my lord mayor's green women! guests o' the game, true bred. I'll provide you a coach to take the air in.

MRS. LIT. But do you think you can get one? [481

KNOCK. O, they are common as wheelbarrows where there are great dunghills. Every pettifogger's wife has 'em; for first he buys a coach that he may marry, and then he marries that he may be made cuckold in't: for, if their wives ride not to their cuckolding, they do 'em no credit. [URSULA, MRS. LITTLEWIT, *and* MRS. OVERDO *go into the inner room.*] "Hide and be hidden, ride and be ridden," says the vapor of experience. [492

Enter TROUBLEALL

TRO. By what warrant does it say so?

KNOCK. Ha, mad child o' the pie-pouldres! art thou there? fill us a fresh can, Urs; we may drink together.

TRO. I may not drink without a warrant, captain.

KNOCK. 'Slood, thou'll not stale without a warrant shortly.—Whit, give me pen, ink, and paper, I'll draw him a [502 warrant presently.

TRO. It must be Justice Overdo's.

KNOCK. I know, man; fetch the drink, Whit.

WHIT. I pre dee now, be very brief, captain; for de new ladies stay for dee.

[*Goes within, and re-enters with a can.*

KNOCK. O, as brief as can be, here [510 'tis already. [*Gives* TROUBLEALL *a paper.*] Adam Overdo.

TRO. Why, now I'll pledge you, captain. [*Drinks.*

KNOCK. Drink it off; I'll come to thee anon again. [*Exit.*

SCENE V

For some reason unexplained, the Watchmen have changed their minds and put OVERDO *in the stocks once more. We are again at the back of* URSULA'S *booth and see him there in his ignominious position.* EDGWORTH *has given* QUARLOUS *the filched license; and the two now enter.*

QUAR. <Well, sir, you are now discharged; beware of being spied hereafter.

EDG. Sir, will it please you enter in here at Urs'la's, and take part of a silken gown, a velvet petticoat, or a wrought [12 smock? I am promised such, and I can spare a gentleman a moiety.

QUAR. Keep it for your companions in beastliness; I am none of them, sir. If I had not already forgiven you a greater trespass, or thought you yet worth my beating, I would instruct your manners to whom you made your offers. But go [20

[3] were carted, as a bawd.

your ways; talk not to me, the hangman is only fit to discourse with you; the hand of beadle is too merciful a punishment for your trade of life. [*Exit* EDGWORTH.] I am sorry I employed this fellow, for he thinks me such; *facinus quos inquinat æquat*. But it was for sport; and, would I make it serious, the getting of this license is nothing to me, without other circumstances concur. I do think how [30 impertinently I labor, if the word be not mine that the ragged fellow marked; and what advantage I have given Ned Winwife in this time now of working her, though it be mine. He'll go near to form to her what a debauched rascal I am, and fright her out of all good conceit of me. I should do so by him, I am sure, if I had the opportunity. But my hope is in her temper yet; and it must needs be next to despair, that is grounded on any part of a woman's discretion. I would give, by [42 my troth now, all I could spare, to my clothes and my sword, to meet my tattered soothsayer again, who was my judge i' the question, to know certainly whose word he has damned or saved; for till then I live but under a reprieve. I must seek him. Who be these?>

BRISTLE *and Officers bring in* WASPE. [50

WASPE. Sir, you are a Welsh cuckold, and a prating runt, and no constable.

BRI. You say very well.—Come, put in his leg in the middle roundel, and let him hole there. [*They put his leg in the middle receptacle of the three provided.*

WASPE. You stink of leeks, metheglin, and cheese, you rogue.

BRI. Why, what is that to you, if you sit sweetly in the stocks in the meantime? if you have a mind to stink too, your breeches sit close enough to your [62 bum. Sit you merry, sir.

QUAR. How now, Numps?

WASPE. It is no matter how; pray you look off.

QUAR. Nay, I'll not offend you, Numps; I thought you had sat there to be seen.

WASPE. And to be sold, did you not? pray you mind your business, an [70 you have any.

QUAR. Cry you mercy, Numps; does your leg lie high enough?

Enter HAGGISE.

BRI. How now, neighbor Haggise, what says Justice Overdo's worship to the other offenders?

HAG. Why, he says just nothing; what should he say, or where should he say? He is not to be found, man; he ha' not been seen i' the Fair here all this livelong day, never since seven o'clock i' the [82 morning. His clerks know not what to think on't. There is no court of pie-pouldres yet. Here they be returned.

Enter Officers with BUSY.

BRI. What shall be done with 'em then, in your discretion?

HAG. I think we were best put them in the stocks in discretion (there they will [90 be safe in discretion) for the valor of an hour, or such a thing, till his worship come.

BRI. It is but a hole matter if we do, neighbor Haggise.—[*To* WASPE.] Come, sir, here is company for you.—Heave up the stocks. [*As they open the stocks,* WASPE *puts his shoe on his hand, and slips it in for his leg.* [99

WASPE. <I shall put a trick upon your Welsh diligence perhaps.>

BRI., *to* BUSY. Put in your leg, sir. [*They put him in the stocks.*

QUAR. What, Rabbi Busy! is he come?

BUSY. I do obey thee. The lion may roar; but he cannot bite. I am glad to be thus separated from the heathen of the land, and put apart in the stocks, for the holy cause.

WASPE. What are you, sir? [110

BUSY. One that rejoiceth in his affliction, and sitteth here to prophesy the destruction of fairs and May-games, wakes and Whitsun-ales, and doth sigh and groan for the reformation of these abuses.

WASPE, *to* OVERDO. And do you sigh and groan too, or rejoice in your affliction?

OVER. I do not feel it, I do not think

of it, it is a thing without me. Adam, thou art above these batteries, these [120 contumelies. *In te manca ruit fortuna,* as thy friend Horace says; thou art one, *Quem neque pauperies, neque mors, neque vincula terrent.* And therefore, as another friend of thine says, I think it be thy friend Persius, *Non te quæsiveris extra.*

QUAR. What's here! a stoic i' the stocks? the fool is turned philosopher. [129

BUSY. Friend, I will leave to communicate my spirit with you, if I hear any more of those superstitious relics, those lists of Latin, the very rags of Rome, and patches of Popery.

WASPE. Nay, an you begin to quarrel, gentlemen, I'll leave you. I ha' paid for quarrelling too lately: look you, a device, but shifting in a hand for a foot. God b' w' you. [*Slips out his hand.*

BUSY. Wilt thou then leave thy [140 brethren in tribulation?

WASPE. For this once, sir. [*Exit, running.*

BUSY. Thou art a halting neutral.—Stay him there, stop him, that will not endure the heat of persecution.

BRI., *who has been talking to* HAGGISE *and the rest of the Watch, heedless of the offenders in the stocks.* How now, what's the matter? [150

BUSY. He is fled, he is fled, and dares not sit it out.

BRI. What, has he made an escape? which way?—Follow, neighbor Haggise.

[HAGGISE *and other watchmen run out in different directions.*

Enter DAME PURECRAFT.

PURE. O me, in the stocks! have the wicked prevailed? [159

BUSY. Peace, religious sister, it is my calling; comfort yourself; an extraordinary calling, and done for my better standing, my surer standing, hereafter.

Enter TROUBLEALL, *with the can of liquor he has brought from* URSULA'S.

TRO. By whose warrant, by whose warrant, this?

QUAR. <O, here's my man dropped in I looked for.>

OVER. Ha! [170

PURE. O, god sir, they have set the faithful here to be wondered at; and provided holes for the holy of the land.

TRO. Had they warrant for it? showed they Justice Overdo's hand? if they had no warrant, they shall answer it.

Re-enter HAGGISE.

BRI. Sure you did not lock the stocks sufficiently, neighbor Toby. [179

HAG. No! see if you can lock them better.

BRI. They are very sufficiently locked, and truly; yet something is the matter.

TRO. True; your warrant is the matter that is in question; by what warrant?

BRI. Madman, hold your peace, I will put you in his room else, in the very same hole, do you see?

QUAR. How? is he a madman? [189

TRO. Show me Justice Overdo's warrant, I obey you.

HAG. You are a mad fool; hold your tongue. [*Exeunt* HAGGISE *and* BRISTLE

TRO. In Justice Overdo's name, I drink to you, and here's my warrant. [*Shows his can.*

OVER. <Alas, poor wretch! how it earns my heart for him.>

QUAR. <If he be mad, it is in vain to question him. I'll try him though.> [200 Friend, there was a gentlewoman showed you two names some hours since, Argalus and Palemon, to mark in a book; which of them was it you marked?

TRO. I mark no name but Adam Overdo: that is the name of names; he only is the sufficient magistrate; and that name I reverence, show it me.

QUAR. <This fellow's mad indeed: I am further off now than afore.> [210

OVER. <I shall not breathe in peace till I have made him some amends.>

QUAR. <Well, I will make another use of him is come in my head: I have a nest of beards in my trunk, one something like his.>

Re-enter BRISTLE *and* HAGGISE.

BRI. This mad fool has made me that I know not whether I have locked the stocks or no: I think I locked them. [220

[*Tries the locks.*

TRO. Take Adam Overdo in your mind, and fear nothing.

BRI. 'Slid, madness itself! hold thy peace, and take that. [*Strikes him.*

TRO. Strikest thou without a warrant? take thou that. [*Strikes* BRISTLE. *A scuffle ensues,* HAGGISE *also taking part against* TROUBLEALL. *The stocks are left open.* [230

BUSY. We are delivered by miracle; fellow in fetters, let us not refuse the means; this madness was of the spirit: the malice of the enemy hath mocked itself. [BUSY *and* OVERDO *run off.*

PURE. Mad do they call him! the world is mad in error, but he is mad in truth: I loved him o' the sudden (the cunning man said all true) and shall love him more and more. How well it be- [240 comes a man to be mad in truth! O that I might be his yoke-fellow, and be mad with him! what a many should we draw to madness in truth with us! [*Exit.*

BRI., *discovering the escape of his prisoners, and much perturbed accordingly.* How now, all scaped! where's the woman? it is witchcraft! her velvet hat is a witch, o' my conscience, or my key! the one.—The madman was a devil, [250 and I am an ass; so bless me, my place, and mine office!

ACT FIVE

Outside a puppet-show booth, a little later the same afternoon, with LEATHERHEAD *dressed as a showman.* FILCHER *and* SHARKWELL *are the doorkeepers, and the latter carries a flag. The interior of the booth is seen behind.*

LEATH. Well, luck and Saint Bartholomew! out with the sign of our invention, in the name of wit, and do you beat the drum the while: all the foul i' [10 the Fair; I mean, all the dirt in Smithfield—that's one of Master Littlewit's carwhitchets now—will be thrown at our banner to-day, if the matter does not please the people. O, the motions that I, Lanthorn Leatherhead, have given light to, in my time, since my Master Pod died! Jerusalem was a stately thing, and so was Nineveh, and the City of Norwich, and Sodom and Gomorrah, with [20 the rising of the prentices, and pulling down the bawdy-houses there upon Shrove Tuesday; but the Gunpowder Plot, there was a get-penny! I have presented that to an eighteen or twenty-pence audience, nine times in an afternoon. Your home-born projects prove ever the best, they are so easy and familiar; they put too much learning i' [29 their things now o' days: and that, I fear, will be the spoil of this. Littlewit! I say, Micklewit! if not too mickle! look to your gathering there, goodman Filcher.

FILCH. I warrant you, sir.

LEATH. An there come any gentlefolks, take twopence apiece, Sharkwell.

SHARK. I warrant you, sir, threepence an we can.

Enter OVERDO, *disguised like a porter.*

OVER. <This latter disguise I have [40 borrowed of a porter shall carry me out to all my great and good ends; which, however interrupted, were never destroyed in me: neither is the hour of my severity yet come to reveal myself, wherein, cloud-like, I will break out in rain and hail, lightning and thunder, upon the head of enormity. Two main works I have to prosecute: first one, is to invent some satisfaction for the poor [50 kind wretch who is out of his wits for my sake. And yonder I see him coming. I will walk aside and project for it.>

Enter WINWIFE *and* GRACE.

WINW. I wonder where Tom Quarlous is, that he returns not; it may be he is struck in here to seek us.

GRACE. See, here's our madman again.

Enter, from the other side, QUARLOUS, *in* TROUBLEALL'S *clothes, followed by* DAME PURECRAFT. [61

QUAR. <I have made myself as like him as his gown and cap will give me leave.>

PURE. Sir, I love you, and would be glad to be mad with you, in truth.

WINW. <How! My widow in love with a madman?>

PURE. Verily, I can be as mad in spirit as you. [70

QUAR. By whose warrant? leave your canting. <Gentlewoman, have I found you?> [*To* MISTRESS GRACE.] Save ye, quit ye, and multiply ye! Where's your book? 'twas a sufficient name I marked, let me see't, be not afraid to show't me.

GRACE. What would you with it, sir?

QUAR. Mark it again and again at your service.

GRACE. Here it is, sir; this was it you marked. [81

QUAR. Palemon! fare you well, fare you well.

WINW. How, Palemon!

GRACE. Yes, faith, he has discovered it to you now, and therefore 'twere vain to disguise it longer; I am yours, sir, by the benefit of your fortune.

WINW. And you have him, mistress, believe it, that shall never give you cause to repent her benefit; but make you [91 rather to think that in this choice she had both her eyes.

GRACE. I desire to put it to no danger of protestation. [*Exeunt* GRACE *and* WINWIFE.

QUAR. <Palemon the word, and Winwife the man!>

PURE. Good sir, vouchsafe a yoke-fellow in your madness, shun not one of the sanctified sisters, that would draw with you in truth. [102

QUAR. Away! you are a herd of hypocritical proud ignorants, rather wild than mad; fitter for woods, and the society of beasts, than houses, and the congregation of men. You are the second part of the society of canters, outlaws to order and discipline, and the only privileged church-robbers of Christendom. Let me alone: <Palemon the word, and Winwife the man!> [112

PURE. <I must uncover myself unto him, or I shall never enjoy him, for all the cunning men's promises.>—Good sir, hear me, I am worth six thousand pound; my love to you is become my rack; I'll tell you all the truth, since you hate the hypocrisy of the party-colored brotherhood. These seven years I have been a wilful holy widow, only to draw feasts [121 and gifts from my entangled suitors: I am also by office an assisting sister of the deacons, and a devourer, instead of a distributor, of the alms. I am a special maker of marriages for our decayed brethren with our rich widows, for a third part of their wealth, when they are married, for the relief of the poor elect: as also our poor handsome young virgins, with our wealthy bachelors or widow- [131 ers; to make them steal from their husbands, when I have confirmed them in the faith, and got all put into their custodies. And, if I ha' not my bargain, they may sooner turn a scolding drab into a silent minister than make me leave pronouncing reprobation and damnation unto them. Our elder, Zeal-of-the-land, would have had me, but I know him to be the [140 capital knave of the land, making himself rich by being made a feoffe in trust to deceased brethren, and cozening their heirs by swearing the absolute gift of their inheritance. And thus, having eased my conscience and uttered my heart with the tongue of my love, enjoy all my deceits together, I beseech you. I should not have revealed this to you, but that in time I think you are mad, and I hope you'll think me so too, sir? [151

QUAR. Stand aside; I'll answer you presently. <Why should I not marry this six thousand pound, now I think on't, and a good trade too that she has beside, ha? The t'other wench Winwife is sure of; there's no expectation for me there. Here I may make myself some saver yet, if she continue mad; there's the question. It is money that I want; why should not I marry the money when 'tis offered [161 me? I have a license and all; it is but razing out one name, and putting in another. There's no playing with a man's

fortune! I am resolved: I were truly mad an I would not!>—Well, come your ways, follow me; an you will be mad, I'll show you a warrant.

Pure. Most zealously; it is that I zealously desire. [*He is taking her along with him, when* Overdo, *mistaking him for* Troubleall, *calls after him.* [172

Over. Sir, let me speak with you.

Quar. By whose warrant?

Over. The warrant that you tender, and respect so; Justice Overdo's. I am the man, friend Troubleall, though thus disguised (as the careful magistrate ought) for the good of the republic in the Fair, and the weeding out of enormity. Do you want a house, or meat, or [181 drink, or clothes? speak whatsoever it is, it shall be supplied you; what want you?

Quar. Nothing but your warrant.

Over. My warrant! for what?

Quar. To be gone, sir.

Over. Nay, I pray thee stay; I am serious, and have not many words nor much time to exchange with thee. Think what may do thee good. [190

Quar. Your hand and seal will do me a great deal of good; nothing else in the whole Fair that I know.

Over. If it were to any end, thou shouldst have it willingly.

Quar. Why, it will satisfy me, that's end enough to look on; an you will not gi' it me, let me go.

Over. Alas, thou shalt ha' it presently; I'll but step into the scrivener's here by, and bring it. Do not go away. [*Exit.* [201

Quar. <Why, this madman's shape will prove a very fortunate one, I think. Can a ragged robe produce these effects? if this be the wise justice, and he bring me his hand, I shall go near to make some use on't.

Re-enter Overdo.

He is come already!>

Over. Look thee! here is my hand and seal, Adam Overdo; if there be any- [211 thing to be written above in that paper that thou want'st now, or at any time hereafter, think on't: it is my deed; I deliver it so. Can your friend write?

Quar. Her hand for a witness, and all is well.

Over. With all my heart. [*He urges her to sign it.* [219

Quar. <Why should not I ha' the conscience to make this a bond of a thousand pound now, or what I would else?>

Over. Look you, there it is, and I deliver it as my deed again.

Quar. Let us now proceed in madness. [*Exeunt* Quarlous *and* Dame Purecraft.

Over. Well, my conscience is much eased; I ha' done my part; though it doth him no good, yet Adam hath of- [230 fered satisfaction. The sting is removed from hence. Poor man, he is much altered with his affliction, it has brought him low. Now for my other work, reducing the young man I have followed so long, in love, from the brink of his bane to the centre of safety. Here, or in some such like vain place, I shall be sure to find him. I will wait the good time.

[Sharkwell *and* Filcher *begin putting up bills outside the booth.* [241

Cokes, *in doublet and hose, enters, followed by a herd of boys.*

Cokes. How now! what's here to do, friend? art thou the master of the monuments?

Shark. 'Tis a motion, an't please your worship.

Over. <My fantastical brother-in-law, Master Bartholomew Cokes!> [250

Cokes. A motion! what's that? [*Reading one of the bills.*] "The ancient modern history of Hero and Leander, otherwise called the Touchstone of true Love, with as true a trial of friendship between Damon and Pythias, two faithful friends o' the Bankside."—Pretty, i' faith! What's the meaning on't? is't an interlude? or what is't?

Filch. Yes, sir, please you come near, we'll take your money within. [261

Cokes. Back with these children! they do so follow me up and down.

Enter LITTLEWIT.

LIT., *to* FILCHER, *at the entrance to the booth.* By your leave, friend.

FILCH. You must pay, sir, an you go in.

LIT. Who? I! I perceive thou know'st not me; call the master of the motion. [270

SHARK. What, do you not know the author, fellow Filcher? You must take no money of him; he must come in gratis: Master Littlewit is a voluntary; he is the author.

LIT. Peace, speak not too loud. I would not have any notice taken that I am the author, till we see how it passes.

COKES. Master Littlewit, how dost thou? [280

LIT. Master Cokes! you are exceeding well met: what, in your doublet and hose, without a cloak or a hat?

COKES. I would I might never stir, as I am an honest man, and by that fire; I have lost all i' the Fair, and all my acquaintance too: didst thou meet anybody that I know, Master Littlewit? my man Numps, or my sister Overdo, or Mistress Grace? Pray thee, Master Littlewit, lend me some money to see inter- [291 lude here; I'll pay thee again, as I am a gentleman. If thou'lt but carry me home, I have money enough there.

LIT. O, sir, you shall command it; what, will a crown serve you?

COKES. I think it will; what do we pay for coming in, fellows?

FILCH. Twopence, sir.

COKES. Twopence! there's twelvepence, friend; nay, I am a gallant, as simple [301 as I look now, if you see me with my man about me and my artillery again. [*He and* LITTLEWIT *pass into the booth, followed by* LEATHERHEAD.

LIT. Your man was i' the stocks e'en now, sir.

COKES. Who, Numps?

LIT. Yes, faith.

COKES. For what, i' faith? I am glad o' that; remember to tell me on't [311 anon; I have enough now. What manner of matter is this, Master Littlewit? what kind of actors ha' you? are they good actors?

LIT. Pretty youths, sir, all children both old and young; here's the master of 'em—

LEATH., *to* LITTLEWIT. <Call me not Leatherhead, but Lantern.> [320

LIT. Master Lantern, that gives light to the business.

COKES. In good time, sir! I would fain see 'em. I would be glad to drink with the young company. Which is the tiring-house?

LEATH. Troth, sir, our tiring-house is somewhat little; we are but beginners yet; pray, pardon us: you cannot go upright in't. [330

COKES. No! not now my hat is off? what would you have done with me, if you had had me feather and all, as I was once to-day? Ha' you none of your pretty impudent boys now, to bring stools, fill tobacco, fetch ale, and beg money, as they have at other houses? Let me see some o' your actors.

LIT. Show him 'em, show him 'em, Master Lantern; this is a gentleman that is a favorer of the quality. [LEATHER- [341 HEAD *goes into the back of the booth.*

OVER. <Ay, the favoring of this licentious quality is the consumption of many a young gentleman; a pernicious enormity.>

LEATHERHEAD *comes out again with a basket, containing the puppets.*

COKES. What! do they live in baskets?

LEATH. They do lie in a basket, sir; they are o' the small players. [351

COKES. These be players minors indeed. Do you call these players?

LEATH. They are actors, sir, and as good as any, none dispraised, for dumb shows: indeed, I am the mouth of 'em all.

COKES. Thy mouth will hold them all. I think one tailor would go near to beat all this company with a hand bound behind him. [360

LIT. Ay, and eat 'em all too, an they were in cake-bread.

COKES. I thank you for that, Master

Littlewit; a good jest! Which is your Burbage now?

Leath. What mean you by that, sir?

Cokes. Your best actor, your Field?

Lit. Good, i' faith! you are even with me, sir.

Leath. This is he that acts young [370 Leander, sir: he is extremely beloved of the womenkind, they do so affect his action, the green gamesters that come here! and this is lovely Hero; this with the beard Damon; and this pretty Pythias: this is the ghost of king Dionysius in the habit of a scrivener; as you shall see anon at large.

Cokes. Well, they are a civil company; I like 'em for that; they offer not to fleer, nor jeer, nor break jests, as the great [381 players do: and then, there goes not so much charge to the feasting of 'em, or making 'em drunk, as to the other, by reason of their littleness. Do they use to play perfect? are they never flustered?

Leath. No, sir, I thank my industry and policy for it; they are as well governed a company, though I say it—And here is young Leander is as proper an [390 actor of his inches and shakes his head like an hostler.

Cokes. But do you play it according to the printed book? I have read that.

Leath. By no means, sir.

Cokes. No! how then?

Leath. A better way, sir; that is too learned and poetical for our audience: what do they know what Hellespont is, "guilty of true love's blood"? or what Abydos is? or "the other, Sestos hight"?

Cokes. Th'art i' the right; I do not [402 know myself.

Leath. No, I have entreated Master Littlewit to take a little pains to reduce it to a more familiar strain for our people.

Cokes. How, I pray thee, good Master Littlewit?

Lit. It pleases him to make a matter of it, sir; but there is no such matter, I assure you: I have only made it a [411 little easy and modern for the times, sir, that's all. As for the Hellespont, I imagine our Thames here; and then Leander I make a dyer's son about Puddle-wharf: and Hero a wench o' the Bankside, who, going over one morning to Old Fish-street, Leander spies her land at Trig-stairs, and falls in love with her. Now do I introduce Cupid, having metamorphosed [420 himself into a drawer, and he strikes Hero in love with a pint of sherry; and other pretty passages there are of the friendship that will delight you, sir, and please you of judgment.

Cokes. I'll be sworn they shall: I am in love with the actors already, and I'll be allied to them presently.—They respect gentlemen, these fellows:—Hero shall be my fairing: but which of my fairings?—le' me see—i' faith, my [431 fiddle; and Leander my fiddlestick: then Damon my drum, and Pythias my pipe, and the ghost of Dionysius my hobby-horse. All fitted!

Enter Winwife *and* Grace. Winwife *pays at the entrance, and both pass in together.*

Winw. Look, yonder's your Cokes gotten in among his playfellows; I thought we could not miss him at such a spectacle. [442

Grace. Let him alone, he is so busy he will never spy us. [Cokes *is handling the puppets.* Leatherhead *objects to his doing so.*

Leath. Nay, good sir!

Cokes. I warrant thee I will not hurt her, fellow; what, dost thou think me uncivil? I pray thee be not jealous; I am toward a wife. [451

Lit. Well, good Master Lantern, make ready to begin, that I may fetch my wife; and look you be perfect; you undo me else i' my reputation.

Leath. I warrant you, sir. Do not you breed too great an expectation of it among your friends; that's the only hurter of these things.

Lit. No, no, no. [*Exit.* [460

Cokes. I'll stay here and see; pray thee, let me see.

Winw. How diligent and troublesome he is!

GRACE. The place becomes him, methinks.

OVER. <My ward, Mistress Grace, in the company of a stranger! I doubt I shall be compelled to discover myself before my time.> [470

Enter KNOCKHUM, EDGWORTH, *and* MRS. LITTLEWIT, *followed by* WHIT *supporting* MRS. OVERDO, *masked.*

FILCH. AND SHARK. Twopence a-piece, gentlemen; an excellent motion.

KNOCK. Shall we have fine fireworks and good vapors?

SHARK. Yes, captain, and waterworks too. [479

WHIT. I pre dee take care o' dy shmall lady there, Edgworth; I will look to dish tall lady myself. [*The newcomers enter the booth.*

LEATH. Welcome, gentlemen! welcome, gentlemen!

WHIT. Predee, mashter o' the monshtersh, help a very sick lady here to a chair to shit in.

LEATH. Presently, sir.

WHIT. Good fait now, Urs'la's ale and aquavitæ ish to blame for't. [MRS. OVERDO *is provided with a chair.*] [492 —Shit down shweetheart, shit down and shleep a little.

EDG., *courting* MRS. LITTLEWIT. Madam, you are very welcome hither.

KNOCK. Yes, and you shall see very good vapors.

OVER. <Here is my care come! I like to see him in so good company: and yet I wonder that persons of such fashion should resort hither.> [502

EDG. This is a very private house, madam.

LEATH. Will it please your ladyship sit, madam?

MRS. LIT. Yes, good man. <They do so all-to-be-madam me, I think they think me a very lady.

EDG. What else, madam? [510

MRS. LIT. Must I put off my mask to him?

EDG. O, by no means.

MRS. LIT. How should my husband know me then?

KNOCK. Husband!, an idle vapor; he must not know you, nor you him: there's the true vapor.>

OVER. <Yea! I will observe more of this.>—Is this a lady, friend? [520

WHIT. Ay, and dat is anoder lady, shweetheart; if thou hasht a mind to 'em, give me twelvepence from tee, and dou shalt have eder oder on 'em.

OVER. <Ay! this will prove my chiefest enormity: I will follow this.>

EDG. Is not this a finer life, lady, than to be clogged with a husband?

MRS. LIT. Yes, a great deal. When will they begin, trow, in the name o' the motion? [531

EDG. By-and-by, madam; they stay but for company.

KNOCK. Do you hear, puppet-master, these are tedious vapors; when begin you?

LEATH. We stay but for Master Littlewit, the author, who is gone for his wife; and we begin presently.

MRS. LIT. <That's I, that's I.

EDG. That was you, lady; but now you are no such poor thing.> [542

KNOCK. Hang the author's wife, a running vapor! here be ladies will stay for ne'er a Delia o' 'em all.

WHIT. But hear me now, here ish one o' de ladiesh ashleep; stay till she but vake, man.

Enter WASPE.

WASPE. How now, friends! what's here to do? [551

FILCH. AND SHARK. Twopence a-piece, sir, the best motion in the Fair.

WASPE. I believe you lie; if you do, I'll have my money again, and beat you.

MRS. LIT. <Numps is come!>

WASPE. Did you see a master of mine come in here, a tall young squire of Harrow-o'-the-Hill, Master Bartholomew Cokes? [560

FILCH. I think there be such a one within.

WASPE. Look he be, you were best: but it is very likely: I wonder I found him, not at all the rest. I ha' been at the

Eagle, and the Black Wolf, and the Bull with the Five Legs and Two Pizzles—he was a calf at Uxbridge Fair two years agone—and at the Dogs that dance the morrice, and the Hare of the Tabor; and missed him at all these! Sure this must needs be some fine sight that holds him so, if it have him. [*Pays and enters.* [573

COKES. Come, come, are you ready now?

LEATH. Presently, sir.

WASPE. <Hoyday, he's at work in his doublet and hose!>—Do you hear, sir, are you employed, that you are bare-headed and so busy? [580

COKES. Hold your peace, Numps; you ha' been i' the stocks, I hear.

WASPE. Does he know that! nay, then the date of my authority is out; I must think no longer to reign; my government is at an end. He that will correct another must want fault in himself.

WINW. Sententious Numps! I never heard so much from him before.

LEATH. Sure Master Littlewit will not come.—Please you take your place, sir; we'll begin. [592

COKES. I pray thee do, mine ears long to be at it, and mine eyes too.—O Numps, in the stocks, Numps! Where's your sword, Numps?

WASPE. I pray you intend[1] your game, sir; let me alone.

COKES. Well then, we are quit for all. Come, sit down, Numps; I'll interpret [600 to thee. Did you see Mistress Grace? It's no matter neither now I think on't; tell me anon.

WINW. <A great deal of love and care he expresses.

GRACE. Alas, would you have him to express more than he has? That were tyranny.>

COKES. Peace, ho! now, now!

LEATHERHEAD *begins his marionette show, introducing first the puppet who does duty for* LEANDER. [612

LEATH. *Gentles, that no longer your expectations may wander,*
Behold our chief actor, amorous Leander,
With a great deal of cloth, lapped about him like a scarf.
For he yet serves his father, a dyer at Puddle-wharf,
Which place we'll make bold with, to call it our Abydus. [621
As the Bankside is our Sestos; and let it not be denied us.
Now, as he is beating to make the dye take the fuller,
Who chances to come by, but fair Hero in a sculler;
And, seeing Leander's naked leg and goodly calf,
Cast at him from the boat a sheep's eye and a half. [631
Now she is landed, and the sculler come back.
By-and-by you shall see what Leander doth lack.

LEAN. *Cole, Cole, old Cole!*

LEATH. *That is the sculler's name without control.*

LEAN. *Cole, Cole, I say, Cole!*

LEATH. *We do hear you.* [640

LEAN. *Old Cole!*

LEATH. *Old Cole! Is the dyer turned collier? How do you sell?*

LEAN. *A pox o' your manners, kiss my hole here, and smell.*

LEATH. *Kiss your hole and smell! there's manners indeed.*

LEAN. *Why, Cole, I say, Cole!*

LEATH. *Is't the sculler you need?*

LEAN. *Ay, and be hanged.* [650

LEATH. *Be hanged! look you yonder. Old Cole, you must go hang with Master Leander.*

COLE. *Where is he?*

LEAN. *Here, Cole: what fairest of fairs*
Was that fare that thou landest but now at Trig-stairs!

COKES. What was that, fellow? pray thee tell me, I scarce understand them.

LEATH. *Leander does ask, sir, what fairest of fairs* [661
Was the fare he landed but now at Trig-stairs?

COLE. *It is lovely Hero.*

LEAN. *Nero?*

[1] attend to.

COLE. *No, Hero.*

LEATH. *It is Hero*
Of the Bankside, he saith, to tell you truth without erring,
Is come over into Fish-street to eat some fresh herring. [671
Leander says no more, but as fast as he can,
Gets on all his best clothes, and will after to the Swan.

COKES. Most admirable good, is't not?

LEATH. *Stay, sculler.*

COLE. *What say you?*

LEATH. *You must stay for Leander, And carry him to the wench.* [680

COLE. *You rogue, I am no pander.*

COKES. He says he is no pander. 'Tis a fine language; I understand it now.

LEATH. *Are you no pander, goodman Cole? here's no man says you are; You'll grow a hot cole, it seems; pray you stay for your fare.*

COLE. *Will he come away?*

LEATH. *What do you say?*

COLE. *I'd ha' him come away.*

LEATH. *Would you ha' Leander come away? why, pray, sir, stay.* [692
You are angry, goodman Cole; I believe the fair maid
Came over wi' you a' trust: tell us, sculler, are you paid?

COLE. *Yes, goodman Hogrubber of Pickthatch.*

LEATH. *How, Hogrubber of Pickthatch!* [700

COLE. *Ay, Hogrubber of Pickthatch. Take you that.* [Strikes him over the pate.

LEATH. *O, my head.*

COLE. *Harm watch, harm catch.*

COKES. "Harm watch, harm catch," he says; very good, i' faith.—The sculler had like to ha' knocked you, sirrah.

LEATH. Yes, but that his fare called him away.

LEAN. *Row apace, row apace, row, row, row, row, row.* [711

LEATH. *You are knavishly loaden, sculler, take heed where you go.*

COLE. *Knave i' your face, goodman rogue.*

LEAN. *Row, row, row, row, row, row.*

COKES. He said, "knave i' your face," friend.

LEATH. Ay, sir, I heard him; but there's no talking to these watermen, they will ha' the last word. [721

COKES. God's my life! I am not allied to the sculler yet; he shall be *Dauphin, my boy.* But my fiddlestick does fiddle in and out too much: I pray thee speak to him on't; tell him I would have him tarry in my sight more.

LEATH. I pray you be content; you'll have enough on him, sir.
Now, gentles, I take it, here is none of you so stupid, [731
But that you have heard of a little god of love called Cupid;
Who out of kindness to Leander, hearing he but saw her,
This present day and hour doth turn himself to a drawer.
And because he would have their first meeting to be merry,
He strikes Hero in love to him with a [740 *pint of sherry,*
Which he tells her from amorous Leander is sent her,
Who after him into the room of Hero doth venter. [LEANDER *goes into* MISTRESS HERO'S *room.*

JONAS. *A pint of sack, score a pint of sack i' the Coney.*

COKES. Sack! you said but e'en now it should be sherry. [750

JONAS. *"Why, so it is; sherry, sherry, sherry!"*

COKES. "Sherry, sherry, sherry!" By my troth, he makes me merry. I must have a name for Cupid too. Let me see, thou might'st help me now, an thou wouldst, Numps, at a dead lift; but thou art dreaming o' the stocks still. Do not think on't, I have forgot it; 'tis but a nine days' wonder, man; let it not trouble thee. [761

WASPE. I would the stocks were about your neck, sir; condition I hung by the heels in them till the wonder wore off from you, with all my heart.

COKES. Well said, resolute Numps!—But, hark you, friend, where's the friend-

ship all this while between my drum Damon and my pipe Pythias?

LEATH. You shall see by-and-by, sir. [770

COKES. You think my hobby-horse is forgotten too; no, I'll see 'em all enact before I go; I shall not know which to love best else.

KNOCK. This gallant has interrupting vapors, troublesome vapors. Whit, puff with him.

WHIT. No, I pre dee, captain, let him alone; he is a child, i' faith, la.

LEATH. *Now, gentles, to the friends, who in number are two,* [781

And lodged in that alehouse in which fair Hero does do.

Damon, for some kindness done him the last week,

Is come, fair Hero, in Fish-street, this morning to seek.

Pythias does smell the knavery of the meeting,

And now you shall see their true-friendly greeting. [791

PYTHIAS. *You whore-masterly slave, you.*

COKES. "Whore-masterly slave, you!" very friendly and familiar that!

DAMON. *Whore-master in thy face.*

Thou hast lien with her thyself, I'll prove't i' this place.

COKES. Damon says Pythias has lien with her himself; he'll prove't in this [800 place.

LEATH. *They are whore-masters both, sir, that's a plain case.*

PYTHIAS. *You lie like a rogue.*

LEATH. *Do I lie like a rogue?*

PYTHIAS. *A pimp and a scab.*

LEATH. *A pimp and a scab!*

I say, between you, you have both but one drab.

DAMON. *You lie again.* [810

LEATH. *Do I lie again?*

DAMON. *Like a rogue again.*

LEATH. *Like a rogue again!*

PYTHIAS. *And you are a pimp again.*

COKES. And you are a pimp again, he says.

DAMON. *And a scab again.*

COKES. And a scab again, he says.

LEATH. *And I say again, you are both whore-masters again.* [820

And you have both but one drab again.

DAMON AND PYTHIAS. *Dost thou, dost thou, dost thou?* [They strike him.

LEATH. *What, both at once?*

PYTHIAS. *Down with him, Damon.*

DAMON. *Pink his guts, Pythias.*

LEATH. *What, so maliciöus?*

Will ye murder me, masters both, i' mine own house?

COKES. Ho! well acted, my drum, well acted, my pipe, well acted still! [831

WASPE. Well acted, with all my heart.

LEATH. *Hold, hold your hands.*

COKES Ay, both your hands, for my sake! for you ha' both done well.

DAMON. *Gramercy, pure Pythias.*

PYTHIAS. *Gramercy, dear Damon.*

COKES. Gramercy to you both, my pipe and my drum.

PYTHIAS AND DAMON. *Come, now we'll together to breakfast to Hero.* [841

LEATH. *'Tis well you can now go to breakfast to Hero.*

You have given me my breakfast, with a hone and honero. [COKES, *like the country bumpkin he is, has become more and more excited as the play has proceeded, and more and more ready to believe in its reality.*

COKES. How is't, friend, ha' they hurt thee? [851

LEATH. O no:

Between you and I, sir, we do but make show.—

Thus, gentles, you perceive, without any denial,

'Twixt Damon and Pythias here, friendship's true trial.

Though hourly they quarrel thus, and roar each with other, [860

They fight you no more than does brother with brother;

But friendly together, at the next man they meet,

They let fly their anger, as here you might see't.

COKES. Well, we have seen it, and thou hast felt it, whatsoever thou sayest. What's next, what's next?

LEATH. *This while young Leander with fair Hero is drinking,* [871
And Hero grown drunk to any man's thinking!
Yet was it not three pints of sherry could flaw her,
Till Cupid, distinguished like Jonas the drawer,
From under his apron, where his lechery lurks,
Put love in her sack. Now mark how it works. [881

HERO. *O Leander, Leander, my dear, my dear Leander,*
I'll for ever be thy goose, so thou'lt be my gander.

COKES. Excellently well said, Fiddle, she'll ever be his goose, so he'll be her gander: was't not so?

LEATH. Yes, sir, but mark his answer now. [890

LEAN. *And, sweetest of geese, before I go to bed,*
I'll swim over the Thames, my goose, thee to tread.

COKES. Brave! he will swim o'er the Thames, and tread his goose to-night, he says.

LEATH. Ay, peace, sir, they'll be angry if they hear you eavesdropping, now they are setting their match. [900

LEAN. *But, lest the Thames should be dark, my goose, my dear friend,*
Let thy window be provided of a candle's end.

HERO. *Fear not, my gander, I protest I should handle*
My matters very ill, if I had not a whole candle.

LEAN. *Well then, look to't, and kiss me to boot.* [910

LEATH. *Now here come the friends again, Pythias and Damon,*
And under their cloaks they have of bacon a gammon.

PYTHIAS. *Drawer, fill some wine here.*

LEATH. *How, some wine there!*
There's company already, sir, pray forbear.

DAMON. *'Tis Hero.*

LEATH. *Yes, but she will not to be taken,* [921
After sack and fresh-herring, with your Dunmou bacon.

PYTHIAS. *You lie; it's Westfabian.*

LEATH. *Westphalian, you should say.*

DAMON. *If you hold not your peace, you are a coxcomb, I would say.*

[LEANDER *and* HERO *kiss.*

What's here, what's here? kiss, kiss upon kiss. [930

LEATH. *Ay, wherefore should they not? what harm is in this?*
'Tis Mistress Hero.

DAMON. *Mistress Hero's a whore.*

LEATH. *Is she a whore? keep you quiet, or, sir knave, out of door.*

DAMON. *Knave out of door!*

HERO. *Yes, knave out of door.*

DAMON. *Whore out of door.* [They fall together by the ears. [940

HERO. *I say, knave out of door.*

DAMON. *I say, whore out of door.*

PYTHIAS. *Yea, so say I too.*

HERO. *Kiss the whore o' the arse.*

LEATH. *Now you ha' something to do.*
You must kiss her o' the arse, she says.

DAMON AND PYTHIAS. *So we will, so we will.* [They kick her.

HERO. *O my haunches, O my haunches, hold, hold.* [950

LEATH. *Stand'st thou still!*
Leander, where art thou? stand'st thou still like a sot,
And not offerest to break both their heads with a pot?
See who's at thine elbow there! puppet Jonas and Cupid.

JONAS. *Upon 'em, Leander, be not so stupid.*

LEAN. *You goat-bearded slave!* [960

DAMON. *You whore-master knave!*

[They fight.

LEAN. *Thou art a whore-master.*

JONAS. *Whore-masters all.*

LEATH. *See, Cupid with a word has ta'en up the brawl.*

KNOCK. These be fine vapors.

COKES. By this good day, they fight bravely; do they not, Numps?

WASPE. Yes, they lacked but you to be their second all this while. [971

LEATH. *This tragical encounter falling out thus to busy us,*
It raises up the ghost of their friend Dionysius;
Not like a monarch, but the master of a school,
In a scrivener's furred gown, which shows he is no fool;
For therein he hath wit enough to keep himself warm. [981
"O Damon," he cries, "and Pythias, what harm
Hath poor Dionysius done you in his grave,
That after his death you should fall out thus and rave,
And call amorous Leander whore-master knave?"

DAMON. *I cannot, I will not, I promise you, endure it.*

RABBI BUSY *rushes in.*

BUSY. Down with Dagon! down [993 with Dagon! 'tis I will no longer endure your profanations.

LEATH. What mean you, sir?

BUSY. I will remove Dagon there, I say, that idol, that heathenish idol, that remains, as I may say, a beam, a very beam—not a beam of the sun, nor a [1000 beam of the moon, nor a beam of a balance, neither a house-beam, nor a weaver's beam, but a beam in the eye, in the eye of the brethren; a very great beam, an exceeding great beam; such as are your stage-players, rimers, and morrice-dancers, who have walked hand in hand, in contempt of the brethren and the cause, and been borne out by instruments of no mean countenance.

LEATH. Sir, I present nothing but what is licensed by authority. [1012

BUSY. Thou art all license, even licentiousness itself, Shimei!

LEATH. I have the Master of the Revels' hand for't, sir.

BUSY. The master of rebels' hand thou hast—Satan's! Hold thy peace, thy scurrility; shut up thy mouth; thy profession is damnable; and in pleading [1020 for it thou dost plead for Baal. I have long opened my mouth wide, and gaped. I have gaped, as the oyster for the tide, after thy destruction: but cannot compass it by suit or dispute; so that I look for a bickering ere long, and then a battle.

KNOCK. Good Banbury vapors!

COKES. Friend, you'd have an ill match on't, if you bicker with him here; though he be no man o' the fist, he has friends that will go to cuffs for him.—Numps, will not you take our side? [1032

EDG. Sir, it shall not need; in my mind he offers him a fairer course, to end it by disputation.—Hast thou nothing to say for thyself, in defence of thy quality?

LEATH. Faith, sir, I am not well-studied in these controversies between the hypocrites and us. But here's one of my motion, puppet Dionysius, shall undertake him; and I'll venture the cause on't. [1042

COKES. Who, my hobby-horse! will he dispute with him?

LEATH. Yes, sir, and make a hobby-ass of him, I hope.

COKES. That's excellent! indeed he looks like the best scholar of 'em all. Come, sir, you must be as good as your word now. [1050

BUSY. I will not fear to make my spirit and gifts known: assist me, zeal, fill me, fill me, that is, make me full!

WINW. <What a desperate, profane wretch is this! is there any ignorance or impudence like his, to call his zeal to fill him against a puppet?

QUAR. I know no fitter match than a puppet to commit with an hypocrite!>

BUSY. First, I say unto thee, idol, thou hast no calling. [1061

Throughout the following debate, the ventriloquial LEATHERHEAD *speaks for the puppet* DIONYSIUS.

DION. You lie, I am called Dionysius.

LEATH. The motion says, you lie, he is called Dionysius in the matter, and to that calling he answers.

BUSY. I mean no vocation, idol, no present lawful calling.

DION. Is yours a lawful calling? [1071

LEATH. The motion asketh if yours be a lawful calling?

BUSY. Yes, mine is of the spirit.

DION. Then idol is a lawful calling.

LEATH. He says, then idol is a lawful calling; for you called him idol, and your calling is of the spirit.

COKES. Well disputed, hobby-horse.

BUSY. Take not part with the wicked, young gallant: he neigheth and hinnieth; all is but hinnying sophistry. I call [1082 him idol again; yet, I say, his calling, his profession is profane.—It is profane, idol.

DION. It is not profane.

LEATH. It is not profane, he says.

BUSY. It is profane.

DION. It is not profane.

BUSY. It is profane.

DION. It is not profane. [1090

LEATH. Well said, confute him with "Not" still.—You cannot bear him down with your base noise, sir.

BUSY. Nor he me, with his treble creaking, though he creak like the chariot wheels of Satan; I am zealous for the cause—

LEATH. As a dog for a bone.

BUSY. And I say it is profane, as being the page of Pride, and the waiting-woman of Vanity. [1101

DION. Yea! what say you to your tire-women then?

LEATH. Good.

DION. Or feather-makers i' the Friers, that are o' your faction of faith? are not they, with their perukes, and their puffs, their fans, and their huffs, as much pages of Pride, and waiters upon Vanity? What say you, what say you, what say you?

BUSY. I will not answer for them. [1112

DION. Because you cannot, because you cannot. Is a bugle-maker a lawful calling? or the confect-makers? such you have there; or your French fashioner? you'd have all the sin within yourselves, would you not, would you not?

BUSY. No, Dagon.

DION. What then, Dagonet? is a puppet worse than these? [1121

BUSY. Yes, and my main argument against you is, that you are an abomination; for the male among you putteth on the apparel of the female, and the female of the male.

DION. You lie, you lie, you lie abominably.

COKES. Good, by my troth! he has given him the lie thrice.

DION. It is your old stale argu- [1131 ment against the players, but it will not hold against the puppets; for we have neither male nor female amongst us; and that thou may'st see, if thou wilt, like a malicious purblind zeal as thou art! [*Takes up his garment.*

EDG. By my faith, there he has answered you, friend, a plain demonstration. [1140

DION. Nay, I'll prove, against e'er a Rabbin of 'em all, that my standing is as lawful as his; that I speak by inspiration, as well as he; that I have as little to do with learning as he; and do scorn her helps as much as he.

BUSY. I am confuted; the cause hath failed me.

DION. Then be converted, be converted. [1150

LEATH. Be converted, I pray you, and let the play go on!

BUSY. Let it go on; for I am changed, and will become a beholder with you.

COKES. That's brave, i' faith.—Thou hast carried it away, hobby-horse; on with the play.

OVER., *discovering himself.* Stay, now do I forbid: I am Adam Overdo! sit still, I charge you. [1160

COKES. What, my brother-i'-law!

GRACE. My wise guardian!

EDG. Justice Overdo!

OVER. It is time to take enormity by the forehead, and brand it; for I have discovered enough.

Enter QUARLOUS *in* TROUBLEALL'S *clothes, as before, and* DAME PURECRAFT.

QUAR. Nay, come, mistress bride; you must do as I do, now. You must be mad with me, in truth. I have here Justice Overdo for it. [1172

Over. Peace, good Troubleall; come hither, and you shall trouble none. I will take the charge of you, and your friend too.—You also, young man [*to* Edgworth] shall be my care; stand there.

Edg. <Now, mercy upon me!>

Knock. <Would we were away, Whit; these are dangerous vapors; best fall off with our birds, for fear o' the [1182 cage.> [*They attempt to steal away.*

Over. Stay, is not my name your terror?

Whit. Yesh, fait, man, and it ish for tat we would begone, man.

Enter Littlewit.

Lit. O, gentlemen! did you not see a wife of mine? I ha' lost my little [1190 wife, as I shall be trusted; my little pretty Win. I left her at the great woman's house in trust yonder, the pig-woman's, with Captain Jordan and Captain Whit, very good men, and I cannot hear of her. Poor fool, I fear she's stepped aside.—Mother, did you not see Win?

Over. If this grave matron be your mother, sir, stand by her, *et digito compesce labellum:* I may perhaps spring a wife for you anon.—Brother Bar- [1202 tholomew, I am sadly sorry to see you so lightly given, and such a disciple of enormity with your grave governor Humphrey; but stand you both there, in the middle place; I will reprehend you in your course.—Mistress Grace, let me rescue you out of the hands of the stranger. [1210

Winw. Pardon me, sir, I am a kinsman of hers.

Over. Are you so? of what name, sir?

Winw. Winwife, sir.

Over. Master Winwife! I hope you have won no wife of her, sir; if you have, I will examine the possibility of it at fit leisure.—Now to my enormities: look upon me, O London! and see me, O Smithfield! the example of justice, [1220 and Mirror of Magistrates; the true top of formality and scourge of enormity. Hearken unto my labors, and but observe my discoveries; and compare Hercules with me, if thou dar'st, of old; or Columbus, Magellan, or our countryman Drake, of later times. Stand forth, you weeds of enormity, and spread.—First Rabbi Busy, thou superlunatical hypocrite.—[*To* Leatherhead.] Next thou [1230 other extremity, thou profane professor of puppetry, little better than poetry.—[*To* Knockhum.] Then thou strong debaucher and seducer of youth; [*pointing to* Edgworth] witness this easy and honest young man. [*To* Whit.] Now, thou esquire of dames, madams, and twelvepenny ladies.—Now, my green madam herself of the price; let me unmask your ladyship. [*Unmasks* Mrs. Littlewit. [1441

Lit. O my wife, my wife, my wife!

Over. Is she your wife? *Redde te Harpocratem.*

Enter Troubleall, *with a dripping-pan, followed by* Ursula *and* Nightingale.

Tro. By your leave, stand by, my masters, be uncovered.

Urs. O stay him, stay him, help [1250 to cry, Nightingale; my pan, my pan!

Over. What's the matter?

Night. He has stolen gammer Urs'la's pan.

Tro. Yes; and I fear no man but Justice Overdo.

Over. Urs'la! where is she? O the sow of enormity, this!—Welcome, stand you there;—you, songster, there.

Urs. An't please your worship, I [1260 am in no fault: a gentleman stripped him in my booth, and borrowed his gown, and his hat; and he ran away with my goods here for it.

Over., *to* Quarlous. Then this is the true madman, and you are the enormity!

Quar. You are i' the right; I am mad but from the gown outward.

Over. Stand you there.

Quar. Where you please, sir. [1270

Mrs. Over., *waking.* O, lend me a bason, I am sick, I am sick! where's Mas-

ter Overdo? Bridget, call hither my Adam.

Over. How! [*He is shamed and silenced.*

Whit. Dy very own wife, i' fait, worshipful Adam.

Mrs. Over. Will not my Adam come at me? shall I see him no more, then? [1280

Qúar. Sir, why do you not go on with the enormity? are you oppressed with it? I'll help you: hark you, sir, i' your ear: <Your innocent young man you have ta'en such care of all this day, is a cutpurse that hath got all your brother Cokes his things, and helped you to your beating and the stocks. If you have a mind to hang him now, and show him your magistrate's wit, you may; [1290 but I should think it were better recovering the goods, and to save your estimation in him.> I thank you, sir, for the gift of your ward, Mistress Grace; look you, here is your hand and seal, by the way.—Master Winwife, give you joy, you are Palemon; you are possessed o' th' gentlewoman; but she must pay me value; here's warrant for it.—And, honest madman, there's thy gown and cap again; [1300 I thank thee for my wife.—[*To* Dame Purecraft.] Nay, I can be mad, sweetheart, when I please still; never fear me.—And careful Numps, where's he? I thank him for my license.

Waspe. How!

Quar. 'Tis true, Numps.

Waspe. I'll be hanged then.

Qúar. Look i' your box, Numps.—Nay, sir, [*to* Overdo] stand not you fixed here, like a stake in Finsbury, to be shot at, or the whipping-post i' the Fair, [1312 but get your wife out o' the air, it will make her worse else; and remember you are but Adam, flesh and blood: you have your frailty, forget your other name of Overdo, and invite us all to supper. There you and I will compare our discoveries; and drown the memory of all enormity in your bigg'st bowl at home.

Cokes. How now, Numps, ha' you lost it? I warrant 'twas when thou wert i' the stocks. Why dost not speak? [1323

Waspe, *having vainly searched the box for the license.* I will never speak while I live again, for aught I know.

Over. Nay, Humphrey, if I be patient, you must be so too; this pleasant conceited gentleman hath wrought upon my judgment, and prevailed. I pray you [1330 take care of your sick friend, Mistress Alice, and my good friends all—

Quar. And no *enormities.*

Over. I invite you home with me to my house to supper: I will have none fear to go along, for my intents are *ad correctionem, non ad destructionem; ad ædificandum, non ad diruendum:* so lead on.

Cokes. Yes, and bring the actors along: we'll ha' the rest of the play at home.

[*Exeunt.* [1342

EPILOGUE

Your Majesty hath seen the play, and you
Can best allow it from your ear and view.
You know the scope of writers, and what store
Of leave is given them, if they take not more, [1350
And turn it into license: you can tell
If we have used that leave you gave us well,
Or whether we to rage or license break,
Or be profane, or make profane men speak:
This is your power to judge, great sir, and not
The envy of a few; which if we have got,
We value less what their dislike can bring,
If it so happy be t' have pleased the King. [1362

A FAIR QUARREL

BY

WILLIAM ROWLEY

AND

THOMAS MIDDLETON

INTRODUCTION

Charles Lamb's praise of "A Fair Quarrel" should have been sufficient to secure for it a measure of immortality; yet, as a matter of fact, his enthusiastic eulogy has brought little echo from other critics. The fact is somewhat surprising, since the play is one of the very finest of the era, and the hero, the scrupulous and punctilious Captain Ager, one of the most attractive figures of the Elizabethan drama. The one weakness in his presentation is that he should appear so ready to believe in the dishonor of his mother. That he should accept her statement is natural enough: no son could be expected to imagine that his mother would falsely accuse herself; but that he should, prior to that, have had any doubts concerning her is incredible. The sort of man he is depicted as being could not have had. That is a serious flaw in the portrayal of an otherwise excellently delineated character, most beautifully conceived, most finely felt. It may also be doubted if a mother would have acted as Lady Ager did, in confessing to a sin of which she had not been guilty; but the incredibility of that is more readily pardoned than the unwarrantable doubt in the mind of her son. That is the more unpardonable because he is one of the most lovable, as he is the most quixotically noble, of all Elizabethan heroes. Almost the entire credit for him goes to Middleton.

It is worthy of remark that here, as in "The Changeling," we have Rowley taking the sub-plot, and Middleton the main plot, with Rowley taking a hand in the latter in the opening scene, while in the later play he also closes up the main story. Here he has the entire control of the story of Jane and of the humors of Chough and his man. These are in Rowley's best vain of oddity. Chough is a good comic character; while Trimtram is a humorous creation of real merit. The story of Jane is told with an utter lack of the delicacy of Middleton; but it is quite good work of its sort, though there is little reality about any of its characters. It is not a pleasant story; but it unquestionably holds the reader's interest. It is not easy to comprehend the stupidity of Russell in the final scene, in not suspecting Fitzallen's fatherhood of Jane's infant.

The play, the sources of which are unknown, was first printed in quarto in 1617. The same year a second quarto was issued, with a whole scene (IV 4) not included in the earlier quarto, the edition being

described as containing "new additions of Mr. Chough's and Trimtram's Roaring, and the Bawd's Song." A third quarto appeared in 1622. Professor M. W. Sampson has shown excellent reasons for regarding the play as having been produced early in 1617. The first act contains an allusion to the Earl of Worcester's saltpetre patent of March 13, 1616-7. The duelling episode points to the same time, when Gervase Markham was tried for issuing a challenge to a duel; and Judge Hobart's remark upon the nature of duelling seems to be reflected in the title of the play. The additional matter must have followed close on the heels of the original production, when it was found that the roaring scenes were very much to the popular taste.

CHARACTERS

Russell, *father of Jane.*
The Colonel.
Captain Ager, *son of Lady Ager.*
Friends of the Colonel.
Friends of Captain Ager.
Fitzallen, *privately married to Jane.*
Chough, *a Cornish gentleman.*
Trimtram, *his servant.*
A Physician.
A Surgeon.
An Usher of a Roaring School.
Captain Albo, *a pander.*
Vapor, *a tobacco-seller.*
Lady Ager, *sister of Russell.*
Jane.
The Colonel's Sister.
Anne, *sister of the physician.*
A Dutch Nurse.
Meg, *a bawd.*
Priss, *a harlot.*
Sergeants, Roarers, Servants.

Place: *London and its Neighborhood.*
Time: *The period of production.*

ACT ONE

Scene I (R) [1]

Russell *is a self-seeking man with one only daughter, who is desirous of wedding* Fitzallen. Russell *meditates for her a wealthier marriage and has determined to get rid of* Fitzallen, *by trickery. He is alone, contemplating his villainy.*

Rus. It must be all my care; there's all my love, [9
And that pulls on the t'other. Had I been left
In a son behind me, while I had been here
He should have shifted as I did before him,
Lived on the freeborn portion of his wit;
But a daughter, and that an only one,—O,
We cannot be too careful o' her, too tender! [20
'Tis such
A brittle niceness, a mere cupboard of glasses,
The least shake breaks or cracks 'em. All my aim is
To cast her upon riches; that's the thing
We rich men call perfection; for the world
Can perfect nought without it: 'tis not neatness, [30
Either in handsome wit or handsome outside,
With which one gentleman, far in debt, has courted her;
Which boldness he shall rue. He thinks me blind
And ignorant: I've let him play a long time,
Seemed to believe his worth, which I know nothing: [40
He may perhaps laugh at my easy confidence,
Which closely I requite upon his fondness;
For this hour snaps him; and before his mistress,
His saint, forsooth, which he inscribes my girl,
He shall be rudely taken and disgraced.
The trick will prove an everlasting scarecrow [51
To fright poor gallants from our rich men's daughters.—

Enter Lady Ager *and two Servants.*

Sister! I've such a joy to make you a welcome of,
Better you never tasted.

Lady Ager. Good, sir, spare it not.

Rus. Colonel's come, and your son Captain Ager. [60

Lady Ager. My son? [*Weeps.*

Rus. I knew [2] your eye would be first served;
That's the soul's taster still for grief or joy.

Lady Ager. O, if a mother's dear suit may prevail with him,
From England he shall never part again!

Rus. No question he'll be ruled and grant you that. [70

Lady Ager. I'll bring all my desires to that request. [*Exit with Servants.*

Rus. Affectionate sister! she has no daughter now;
It follows all the love must come to him,
And he has a worth deserves it, were it dearer.

[1] The first five or six speeches appear to be Middleton's.

[2] B, know.

Enter Friend of the Colonel *and* Friend of Captain Ager. [80

Col.'s Fr. I must give way to't.
Rus. <What's here to question?>
Col.'s Fr. Compare young Captain Ager with the colonel!
Cap.'s Fr. Young? why, do you make youth stand for an imputation?
That which you now produce for his disgrace
Infers his nobleness, that, being young,
Should have an anger more inclined to courage [91
And moderation than the colönel—
A virtue as rare as chastity in youth—
And, let the cause be good—conscience in him,
Which ever crowns his acts, and is indeed
Valor's prosperity—he dares then as much
As ever made him famous that you plead for. [100
Col.'s Fr. Then I forbear too long.
Cap.'s Fr. His worth for me!
[*They fight.*
Rus. <Here's noble youths! belike some wench has crossed 'em,
And now they know not what to do with their blood.>

Enter the Colonel *and* Captain Ager.

Col. How now?
Cap. Ager. Hold, hold! what's the incitement? [111
Col. So serious at your game! come, come, the quarrel?
Col.'s Fr. Nothing, good faith, sir.
Col. Nothing? and you bleed?
Col.'s Fr. Bleed! where? pish, a little scratch by chance, sir.
Col. What need this niceness,[3] when you know so well [119
That I must know these things, and truly know 'em?
Your daintiness makes me but more impatient;
This strange concealment frets me.
Col.'s Fr. Words did pass
Which I was bound to answer, as my opinion
And love instructed me;
And, should I take in general fame into 'em, [130
I think I should commit no error in't.
Col. What words, sir, and of whom?
Col.'s Fr. This gentleman
Paralleled Captain Ager's worth with yours.
Col. With mine?
Col.'s Fr. It was a thing I could not listen to
With any patience. [139
Cap. Ager. What should ail you, sir?
There was little wrong done to your friend i' that.
Col. How? little wrong to me?
Cap. Ager. I said so, friend,
And I suppose that you'll esteem it so.
Col. Comparisons!
Cap. Ager. Why, sir, 'twixt friend and friend
There is so even and level a degree,
I will admit of no superlative. [150
Col. Not in terms of manhood?
Rus., *coming forward.* Nay, gentlemen—
Col. Good sir, give me leave—in terms of manhood.
What can you dispute more questionable?
You're a captain, sir; I give you all your due. [159
Cap. Ager. And you are a colönel, a title
Which may include within it many captains:
Yet, sir, but throwing by those titular shadows,
Which add no substance to the men themselves,
And take them uncompounded, man and man,
They may be so with fair equality. [170
Col. You're a boy, sir!
Cap. Ager. And you have a beard, sir:
Virginity and marriage are both worthy;
And the positive purity there are some
Have made the nobler.
Col. How now?
Rus. Nay, good sir—

[3] scrupulousness.

CAP. AGER. I shrink not; he that goes the foremost may [180
Be overtaken.
COL. Death, how am I weighed!
CAP. AGER. In an even balance, sir; a beard put in
Gives but a small advantage, man and man,
And lift the scales.
COL. Patience shall be my curse,
If it ride me further! [*They draw their swords.* [190
RUS. How now, gallants?
Believe me then, I must give aim no longer:
Can words beget swords, and bring 'em forth, ha?
Come, they're abortive propagatiöns;
Hide 'em, for shame! I had thought soldiërs
Had been musical, would not strike out of time, [200
But to the consort of drum, trumps, and fife:
'Tis madman-like to dance without music,
And most unpleasing shows to the beholders,
A Lydian ditty to a Doric note.
Friends, embrace with steel hands! fie, it meets too hard!
I must have those encounters here debarred. [210
COL. Shall I lose here what I have safe brought home
Through many dangers?
CAP. AGER. What's that, sir?
COL. My fame,
Life of the life, my reputation.
Death! I am squared and measured out;
My heights, depths, breadth, all my dimensions taken!
Sure I have yet beyond your astrolabe
A spirit unbounded. [221
CAP. AGER. Sir, you might weigh—
RUS. Tush!
All this is weighing fire, vain and fruitless:
The further it runs into argument,
The further plunged; beseech you, no more on't.
I have a little claim, sir, in your blood,
As neär as the brother to your mother,
If that may serve for power to move [231 your quiet:
The rest I shall make up with courtesy
And an uncle's love.
CAP. AGER. I have done, sir, but—
RUS. But? I'll have no more shooting at these butts.
COL. We'll to pricks when he please.
RUS. You rove all still.
Sir, I have no motive proof to disgest [240
Your raisëd choler back into temperate blood;
But, if you'll make mine age a counsellor—
As all ages have hitherto allowed it
Wisdom in men grows up as years increase—
You shall make me blessed in making peace,
And do your judgment right.
COL. In peace at home [250
Grey hairs are senators, but to determine
Soldiers and their actions—

Enter FITZALLEN *and* JANE.

RUS. 'Tis peace here, sir:
And see, here comes a happy interim;
Here enters now a scene of loving arms;
This couple will not quarrel so.
COL.'s FR., *to the* COLONEL. <Be advised, sir; [259
This gentleman, Fitzallen, is your kinsman;
You may o'erthrow his long-labored fortunes
With one angry minute; 'tis a rich churl,
And this his sole inheritrix; blast not
His hopes with this tempest.
COL. It shall calm me:
All the town's conjurers and their demons could not
Have laid my spirit so.> [270
FITZ. Worthy coz,
I gratulate your fair return to peace!
Your swift fame was at home long before you.
COL. It meets, I hope, your happy fortunes here,
And I am glad in't. I must salute your joys, coz,
With a soldier's encounter. [*Kisses* JANE

FITZ. Worthy Captain Ager! [280
I hope, my kinsman shortly.
RUS. <You must come short indeed,
Or the length of my device will be ill-shrunk.>
Why, now it shows finely! I'll tell you, sir,—
Sir?—nay, son, I know i' th' end 'twill be so—
FITZ. I hope so, sir. [289
RUS. Hope? nay, 'tis past all hope, son.
Here has been such a stormy encounter betwixt
My cousin[4] captain and this brave colönel
About I know not what—nothing indeed—
Competitions, degrees, and comparatives
Of soldiership; but this smooth passage of love [300
Has calmed it all.—Come, I will have it sound;
Let me see your hearts combined in your hands,
And then I will believe the league is good:
It shall be the grape's, if we drink any blood.
COL. I have no anger, sir.
CAP AGER. I have had none, [310
My blood has not yet rose to a quarrel;
Nor have you had cause—
COL. No cause of quarrel?
Death! if my father should tell me so—
RUS. Again?
FITZ. Good sir, for my sake—
COL. Faith, I have done, coz;
You do too hastily believe mine anger:
And yet, to say diminiting valor
In a soldier is no cause of quarrel— [320
RUS. Nay, then, I'll remove the cause, to kill th' effect.—
Kinsman, I'll press you to't, if either love
Or consanguinity may move you to't.
I must disarm you; though ye are a soldier,
Pray, grant me your weapon; it shall be safe. [*Takes* CAPTAIN AGER'S *sword.* [329

[4] kinsman.

At your regress from my house. Now I know
No words can move this noble soldier's sword
To a man undefenced so: we shall parle,
And safely make all perfect friends again.
COL. To show my will, sir, accept mine to you; [*Gives his sword to* RUSSELL.
As good not wear it as not dare to use it.
COL.'S FR. Nay, then, sir, we will be all exampled; [341
We'll have no arms here now but lovers' arms. [*Gives his sword to* RUSSELL.
CAP.'S FR. No seconds must begin a quarrel: take mine, sir. [*Gives his sword to* RUSSELL.
RUS. Why, la, what a fine sunshine's here! these clouds
My breath has blown into another climate. [350
I'll be your armorer; they are not pawned.—
<These were the fish that I did angle for;
I have caught 'em finely. Now for my trick;
My project's lusty, and will hit the nick.> [*Exit with weapons.*
COL. What, is't a match, beauty? I would now have [360
Alliance with my worthy Captain Ager,
To knit our loves the faster: here is witness
Enough, if you confirm it now.
JANE. Sir, my voice
Was long since given, since that I gave my hand.
COL. Would you had sealed too!
JANE. <That wish comes too late,
For I too soon fear my delivery.> [370
My father's hand sticks yet, sir; you may now
Challenge a lawful interest in his:
He took your hand from your enragëd blood,
And gave it freely to your opposite,
My cousin Ager: methinks you should claim from him,
In the less quality of calmer blood, [379
To join the hands of two divided friends,

Even these two that would offer willingly
Their own embrace.
COL.'s[5] FR. Troth, she instructs you well,
Colonel, and you shall do a lover's part
Worth one brave act of valor.
COL. Why, I did
Misdoubt no scruple; is there doubt in it?
FITZ. Faith, sir, delays, which at the least are doubts; [391
But here's a constant resolution fixed,
Which we wish willingly he would accord to.
COL. Tush, he shall do't: I will not be denied;
He owes me so much in the recompense
Of my reconcilement.—Captain Ager,
You will take our parts against your uncle [400
In this quarrel?
CAP. AGER. I shall do my best, sir;
Two denials shall not repulse me: I love
Your worthy kinsman, and wish him mine; I know
He doubts it not.
COL. See, he's returned.

Re-enter RUSSELL *with* SERVANT.

RUS. <Your cue; [409
Be sure you keep it: 'twill be spoken quickly;
Therefore watch it.> [*Exit* SERVANT.
COL. Let's set on him all at once.
ALL. Sir, we have a suit to you.
RUS. What, all at once?
ALL. All, all, i' faith, sir.
RUS. One speaker may yet deliver:
Say, say:
I shall not dare to stand out 'gainst so many. [420
COL. Faith, sir, here's a brabbling[6] matter hangs on demur;
I make the motion for all without a fee;
Pray you, let it be ended this term.
RUS. Ha, ha, ha!—
<That is the rascal's cue, and he has missed it.>
What is't, what is't, sir?
COL. Why, sir, here's a man
And here's a woman—you're scholar good enough— [431
Put 'em together, and tell me what it spells?
RUS. Ha, ha, ha!—
<There's his cue once again!

Re-enter SERVANT.

O, he's come—humph!>
SER. <My master laughs; that is his cue to mischief.>
COL. What say you, sir? [440
SER. Sir—
RUS. Ha! what say you, sir?
SER. Sir, there's a couple desire speedily to speak with you.
RUS. A couple, sir, of what? hounds or horses?
SER. Men, sir; gentlemen or yeomen, I know not which; but the one, sure, they are. [449
RUS. Hast thou no other description of them?
SER. They come with commission, they say, sir, to taste of your earth; if they like it, they'll turn it into gunpowder.
RUS. O, they are saltpetre-men, before me![7]
And they bring commission, the king's power indeed!
They must have entrance: but the knaves will be bribed; [460
There's all the hope we have in officers;
They were too dangerous in a commonwealth,
But that they will be very well corrupted;
Necessary varlets.
SER. Shall I enter 'em,[8] sir?
RUS. By all fair means, sir,
And with all speed, sir: give 'em very good words, [470
To save my ground unravished, unbroke up: [*Exit* SERVANT.
Mine's yet
A virgin earth; the worm hath not been seen
To wriggle in her chaste bowels; and I'd be loth

[5] B, Captain's. [6] wrangling.
[7] A form of assaveration.
[8] B, in.

A gunpowder fellow should deflower her now.
Col. Our suit is yet delayed by this means, sir.
Rus. Alas! I cannot help it! these fellows gone,
As I hope I shall despatch 'em quickly,
A few articles shall conclude your suit:
Who? Master Fitzallen? the only man
That my adoption aims at.
Col. There's good hope then.

Enter two Sergeants *in disguise.*

1 Serg. Save you, sir.
Rus. You are welcome, sir, for aught I know yet.
2 Serg. We come to take a view and taste of your ground, sir.
Rus. I'd rather feed you with better meat, gentlemen;
But do your pleasures, pray.
1 Serg. This is our pleasures:—We arrest you, sir,
In the king's name. [*They arrest* Fitzallen.
Fitz. Ha! at whose suit?
Rus. How's that?
Col. Our weapons, good sir! furnish us!
Jane. Ay me!
Rus. Stay, stay, gentlemen, let's inquire the cause:
It may be but a trifle; a small debt
Shall need no rescue here.
2 Serg. Sir, betwixt three creditors, Master Leach, Master Swallow, and Master Bonesuck, the debts are a thousand pounds.
Rus. A thousand pounds! beshrew me, a good man's substance!
Col. Good sir, our weapons! we'll teach these varlets to walk
In their own parti-colored coats, that they
May be distinguishëd from honest men.
1 Serg. Sir, attempt no rescue; he's our prisoner:
You'll make the danger worse by violence.
Col. A plague upon your gunpowder-treason,
Ye quick-damned varlets! is this your saltpetre-proving,
Your tasting earth? would you might ne'er feed better,
Nor none of your catchpoll tribe!—Our weapons, good sir!
We'll yet deliver him.
Rus. Pardon me, sir;
I dare not suffer rescue here,
At least not by so great an accessary
As to furnish you: had you had your weapons—
But to see the ill fate on't! <My fine trick, i' faith!
Let beggars beware to love rich men's daughters:
I'll teach 'em the new morrice; I learnt it myself
Of another careful father.>
Fitz. May I not be bailed?
2 Serg. Yes, but not with swords.
Col. Slaves, here are sufficient men!
1 Serg. Ay, i' th' field,
But not in the city.—Sir, if this gentleman
Will be one, we'll easily admit the second.
Rus. Who, I? sir, pray, pardon me: I am wronged,
Very much wronged in this; I must needs speak it.—
Sir, you have not dealt like an honest lover
With me nor my child: here you boast to me
Of a great revenue, a large substance,
Wherein you would endow and state my daughter:
Had I missed this, my opinion yet
Thought you a frugal man, to understand
The sure wards against all necessities;
Boldly to defend your wife and family,
To walk unmuffled, dreadless of these flesh-hooks,
Even in the daring'st streets through all the city;
But now I find you a loose prodigal,
A large unthrift: a whole thousand pound!—
Come from him, girl, his inside is not sound.
Fitz. Sir, I am wronged; these are malicious plots

Of some obscure enemies that I have;
These debts are none of mine. [581
Rus. Ay, all say so:
Perhaps you stand engaged for other men;
If so you do, you must then call't your own:
The like arrearage do I run into,
Should I bail you; but I have vowed against it, [589
And I will keep my vows; that is religious.
Fitz. All this is nothing so, sir.
Rus. Nothing so?
By my faith, 'tis, sir; my vows are firm.
Fitz. I neither
Owe these debts, nor am I engaged for others.
Rus. The easier is your liberty regained:
These appear proofs to me. [600
Col. Liberty, sir?
I hope you will not see him go to prison.
Rus. I do not mean to bear him company
So far; but I will see him out of my doors:
O, sir, let him go to prison! 'tis a school
To tame wild bloods; he'll be much better for't.
Col. Better for lying in prison? [610
Rus. In prison; believe it,
Many an honest man lies in prison, else all
The keepers are knaves; they told me so themselves.
Col. Sir, I do now suspect you have betrayed him
And us, to cause us to be weaponless:
If it be so, you're a blood-sucking churl,
One that was born in a great frost, when charity [621
Could not stir a finger; and you shall die
In heat of a burning fever i' the dog-days,
To begin your hell to you: I've said your grace for you;
Now get you to supper as soon as you can;
Pluto, the master of the house, is set already. [630
Cap. Ager. Sir, you do wrong mine uncle.
Col. Pox on your uncle
And all his kin! if my kinsman mingle
No blood with him.
Cap. Ager. You are a foul-mouthed fellow!
Col. Foul-mouthed I will be—thou'rt the son of a whore! [639
Cap. Ager. Ha! whore? plagues and furies! I'll thrust that back,
Or pluck thy heart out after!—"son of a whore"!
Col. On thy life I'll prove it.
Cap. Ager. Death, I am naked!—
Uncle, I'll give you my left hand for my sword
To arm my right with—O, this fire will flame me
Into present ashes! [650
Col. Sir, give us weapons;
We ask our own; you will not rob us of them?
Rus. No, sir, but still restrain your furies here:
At my door I'll give you them, nor at this time
My nephew's; a time will better suit you: [659
And I must tell you, sir, you have spoke swords,
And, 'gainst the law of arms, poisoned the blades,
And with them wounded the reputation
Of an unblemished woman: would you were out of my doors!
Col. Pox on your doors, and let it run all your house o'er!
Give me my sword! [669
Cap. Ager. We shall meet, colonel?
Col. Yes, better provided: to spur thee more,
I do repeat my words—son of a whore!
[*Exit with his* Friend.
Cap's. Fr. Come, sir; 'tis no worse than it was; you can
Do nothing now. [*Exit with* Captain Ager.
Rus. No, I'll bar him now.—
Away with that beggar! [*Exit.* [680
Jane. Good sir,

Let this persuade you for two minutes' stay:
At this price, I know, you can wait all day. [*Giving money.*
1 Serg. You know the remora[9] that stays our ship always.
Jane. Your ship sinks many when this hold lets go.—
O my Fitzallen! what is to be done? [690
Fitz. To be still thine is all my part to be,
Whether in freedom or captivity.
Jane. But art thou so engaged as this pretends?
Fitz. By Heaven, sweet Jane, 'tis all a hellish plot:
Your cruel-smiling father all this while
Has candied o'er a bitter pill for me, [699
Thinking by my remove to plant some other,
And then let go his fangs.
Jane. Plant some other?
Thou hast too firmly stamped me for thine own,
Ever to be rased out: I am not current
In any other's hand; I fear too soon
I shall discover it.
Fitz. Let come the worst; [709
Bind but this knot with an unloosëd line,
I will be still thine own.
Jane. And I'll be thine.
1 Serg. My watch has gone two minutes, master.
Fitz. It shall not be renewed; I go, sir.—Farewell!
Jane. Farewell! we both are prisoned, though not together;
But here's the difference in our luckless chance, [720
I fear mine own, wish thy deliverance.
Fitz. Our hearts shall hourly visit: I'll send to thee;
Then 'tis no prison where the mind is free. [*Exit, with Sergeants.*

Re-enter Russell.

Rus. So, let him go!—Now, wench, I bring thee joys,
A fair sunshine after this angry storm.
It was my policy to remove this beggar:
What? shall rich men wed their only [731 daughters
To two fair suits of clothes, and perhaps yet
The poor tailor is unpaid? no, no, my girl,
I have a lad of thousands coming in:
Suppose he have more wealth than wit to guide it, [739
Why, there's thy gains; thou keep'st the keys of all,
Disposest all; and, for generation,
Man does most seldom stamp 'em from the brain;
Wise men begets fools, and fools are the fathers
To many wise children; *hysteron proteron;*
A great scholar may beget an idiot, [749
And from the plough-tail may come a great scholar;
Nay, they are frequent propagatiöns.
Jane. I am not well, sir.
Rus. Ha! not well, my girl?
Thou shalt have a physician then, [i' faith,]
The best that gold can fetch upon his footcloth,
Thou know'st my tender pity to thee ever; [760
Want nothing that thy wishes can instruct thee
To call for. 'Fore me, and thou look'st half-ill indeed!
But I'll bring one within a day to thee
Shall rouse thee up, for he's come up already;
One Master Chough, a Cornish gentleman; [769
Has as much land of his own fee-simple
As a crow can fly over in half a day;
And, now I think on't, at the Crow at Aldgate
His lodging is. He shall so stir thee up.
Come, come, be cheered! think of thy preferment,
Honor, and attendance; these will bring thee health;
And the way to 'em is to climb by wealth.
[*Exeunt.* [780

[9] a barnacle.

ACT TWO

Scene I (M)

Captain Ager, *a man of the very finest susceptibilities, has returned to his mother's house greatly perturbed by the* Colonel's *slander. Before taking the field against the* Colonel, *he is anxious to be assured that his cause is just.*

Cap. Ager. "The son of a whore!"
There is not such another murdering-piece
In all the stock of calumny; it kills
At one report two reputatiöns,
A mother's and a son's. If it were possible
That souls could fight after the bodies fell,
This was a quarrel for 'em; he should be one, indeed,
That never heard of Heaven's joys or hell's torments,
To fight this out: I am too full of conscience,
Knowledge, and patience, to give justice to't;
So careful of my eternity, which consists
Of upright actions, that, unless I knew
It were a truth I stood for, any coward
Might make my breast his foot-pace: and who lives
That can assure the truth of his conception,
More than a mother's carriage makes it hopeful?
And is't not miserable valor then,
That man should hazard all upon things doubtful?
O, there's the cruelty of my foe's advantage!
Could but my soul resolve my cause were just,
Earth's mountain nor sea's surge should hide him from me!
E'en to hell's threshold would I follow him,
And see the slanderer in before I left him!
But, as it is, it fears me; and I never
Appeared too conscionably just till now.
My good opinion of her life and virtues
Bids me go on, and fain would I be ruled by't;
But when my judgment tells me she's but woman,
Whose frailty let in death to all mankind,
My valor shrinks at that. Certain, she's good;
There only wants but my assurance in't,
And all things then were perfect: how I thirst for't
Here comes the only she that could resolve;
But 'tis too vild a question to demand indeed.

Enter Lady Ager.

Lady Ager. Son, I've a suit to you.
Cap. Ager. <That may do well.>
To me, good madam? you're most sure to speed in't,
Be't i' my power to grant it.
Lady Ager. 'Tis my love
Makes the request, that you would never part
From England more.
Cap. Ager. With all my heart 'tis granted!
<I'm sure I'm i' the way never to part from't.>
Lady Ager. Where left you your dear friend the colönel?
Cap. Ager. O, the dear colonel! I should meet him soon.
Lady Ager. O, fail him not then! he's a gentleman
The fame and reputation of your time
Is much engaged to.
Cap. Ager. Yes, an you knew all, mother.
Lady Ager. I thought I'd known so much of his fair goodness,
More could not have been looked for.
Cap. Ager. O, yes, yes, madam,
And this his last exceeded all the rest.
Lady Ager. For gratitude's sake, let me know this, I prithee!
Cap. Ager. Then thus; and I desire your censure[1] freely,
Whether it appeared not a strange noble kindness in him.

[1] judgment.

LADY AGER. Trust me, I long to hear't.
CAP. AGER. You know he's hasty—
That by the way.
LADY AGER. So are the best conditions; [2]
Your father was the like.
CAP. AGER. <I begin now
To doubt me more: why am not I so too then?
Blood follows blood through forty generations,
And I've a slow-paced wrath—a shrewd dilemma!>
LADY AGER. Well, as you were saying, sir—
CAP. AGER. Marry, thus, good madam:
There was in company a foul-mouthed villain—
Stay, stay,
Who should I liken him to that you have seen?
He comes so near one that I would not match him with;
Faith, just a' the colonel's pitch, he's ne'er the worse man;
Usurers have been compared to magistrates,
Extortioners to lawyers, and the like;
But they all prove ne'er the worse men for that.
LADY AGER. That's bad enough; they need not.
CAP. AGER. This rude fellow,
A shame to all humanity or manners,
Breathes from the rottenness of his gall and malice
The foulest stain that ever man's fame blemished,
Part of which fell upon your honor, madam,
Which heightened my affliction.
LADY AGER. Mine? my honor, sir?
CAP. AGER. The colonel, soon enraged, as he's all touchwood,
Takes fire before me, makes the quarrel his,
Appoints the field; my wrath could not be heard,
His was so high-pitched, so gloriously mounted.
Now, what's the friendly fear that fights within me,
Should his brave noble fury undertake
A cause that were unjust in our defence,
And so to lose him everlastingly
In that dark depth where all bad quarrels sink
Never to rise again, what pity 'twere
First to die here, and never to die there!
LADY AGER. Why, what's the quarrel—speak, sir—that should raise
Such fearful doubt, my honor bearing part on't?—
The words, whate'er they were.
CAP. AGER. "Son of a whore!"
LADY AGER. Thou liest; [*Strikes him.*
And, were my love ten thousand times more to thee,
Which is as much now as e'er mother's was,
So thou should'st feel my anger. Dost thou call
That quarrel doubtful? where are all my merits?
Not one stand up to tell this man his error?
Thou might'st as well bring the sun's truth in question
As thy birth or my honor!
CAP. AGER. Now blessings crown you for't!
It is the joyfull'st blow that e'er flesh felt.
LADY AGER. Nay, stay, stay, sir; thou art not left so soon:
This is no question to be slighted off,
And, at your pleasure, closed up fair again,
As though you'd never touched it: no, honor doubted
Is honor deeply wounded; and it rages
More than a common smart, being of thy making;
For thee to fear my truth, it kills my comfort:
Where should fame seek for her reward, when he
That is her own by the great tie of blood
Is farthest off in bounty? O poor goodness!

[2] dispositions.

That only pay'st thyself with thy own works,
For nothing else look towards thee. Tell me, pray,
Which of my loving cares dost thou requite
With this vild thought, which of my prayers or wishes?
Many thou ow'st me for: this seven year hast thou known me
A widow, only married to my vow;
That's no small witness of my faith and love
To him that in life was thy honored father;
And live I now to know that good mistrusted?

CAP. AGER. No; 't shall appear that my belief is cheerful,
For never was a mother's reputation
Noblier defended: 'tis my joy and pride
I have a firm [faith] to bestow upon it.

LADY AGER. What's that you said, sir?

CAP. AGER. 'Twere too bold and soon yet
To crave forgiveness of you: I'll earn it first:
Dead or alive I know I shall enjoy it.

LADY AGER. What's all this, sir?

CAP. AGER. My joy's beyond expression!
I do but think how wretched I had been
Were this another's quarrel, and not mine.

LADY AGER. Why, is it yours?

CAP. AGER. Mine? think me not so miserable
Not to be mine; then were I worse than abject,
More to be loathed than vileness or sin's dunghill:
Nor did I fear your goodness, faithful madam,
But came with greedy joy to be confirmed in't,
To give the nobler onset. Then shines valor,
And admiration from her fixed sphere draws,
When it comes burnished with a righteous cause;
Without which I'm ten fathoms under coward,
That now am ten degrees above a man,
Which is but one of virtue's easiest wonders.

LADY AGER. But, pray, stay; all this while I understood you
The colonel was the man.

CAP. AGER. Yes, he's the man,
The man of injury, reproach, and slander,
Which I must turn into his soul again.

LADY AGER. The colonel do't? that's strange!

CAP. AGER. The villain did it;
That's not so strange. Your blessing and your leave.

LADY AGER. Come, come, you shall not go!

CAP. AGER. Not go! Were Death
Sent now to summon me to my eternity,
I'd put him off an hour; why, the whole world
Has not chains strong enough to bind me from't:
The strongest is my reverence to you,
Which if you force upon me in this case,
I must be forced to break it.

LADY AGER. Stay, I say!

CAP. AGER. In anything command me but in this, madam.

LADY AGER. <'Las, I shall lose him!> You will hear me first?

CAP. AGER. At my return I will.

LADY AGER. You'll never hear me more, then.

CAP. AGER. How?

LADY AGER. Come back, I say!
You may well think there's cause I call so often.

CAP. AGER. Ha, cause! what cause?

LADY AGER. So much, you must not go.

CAP. AGER. How?

LADY AGER. You must not go.

CAP. AGER. Must not! why?

LADY AGER. I know a reason for't,
Which I could wish you'd yield to, and not know;
If not, it must come forth: faith, do not know,
And yet obey my will.

CAP. AGER. Why, I desire
To know no other than the cause I have;
Nor should you wish it, if you take your injury,
For one more great I know the world includes not.
LADY AGER. Yes, one that makes this nothing: yet be ruled,
And, if you understand not, seek no further. [310
CAP. AGER. I must; for this is nothing.
LADY AGER. Then take all;
And, if amongst it you receive that secret
That will offend you, though you condemn me,
Yet blame yourself a little; for, perhaps,
I would have made my reputation sound
Upon another's hazard with less pity;
But upon yours I dare not.
CAP. AGER. How? [320
LADY AGER. I dare not:
'Twas your own seeking this.
CAP. AGER. If you mean evilly,
I cannot understand you; nor for all the riches
This life has, would I.
LADY AGER. Would you never might!
CAP. AGER. Why, ['tis] your goodness that I joy to fight for. [329
LADY AGER. In that you neither right your joy nor me.
CAP. AGER. What an ill orator has virtue got here!
Why, shall I dare to think it a thing possible
That you were ever false?
LADY AGER. O, fearfully!
As much as you come to.
CAP. AGER. O silence, cover me!
I've felt a deadlier wound than man can give me. [341
False!
LADY AGER. I was betrayed to a most sinful hour
By a corrupted soul I put in trust once,
A kinswoman.
CAP. AGER. Where is she? let me pay her!
LADY AGER. O, dead long since!
CAP. AGER. Nay, then, sh'as all her wages. [351
False! do not say't, for honor's goodness, do not:
You never could be so. He I called father
Deserved you at your best, when youth and merit
Could boast at highest in you; y'had no grace [359
Or virtue that he matched not, no delight
That you invented but he sent it crowned
To your full-wishing soul.
LADY AGER. That heaps my guiltiness.
CAP. AGER. O, were you so unhappy to be false
Both to yourself and me? but to me chiefly.
What a day's hope is here lost! and with it [369
The joys of a just cause! Had you but thought
On such a noble quarrel, you'd ha' died
Ere you'd ha' yielded; for the sin's hate first,
Next for the shame of this hour's cowardice.
Curst be the heat that lost me such a cause,
A work that I was made for! Quench, my spirit, [380
And out with honor's flaming lights within thee!
Be dark and dead to all respects of manhood!
I never shall have use of valor more.
Put off your vow for shame! why should you hoard up
Such justice for a barren widowhood,
That was so injurious to the faith of wedlock? [*Exit* LADY AGER. [390
I should be dead, for all my life's work's ended;
I dare not fight a stroke now, nor engage
The noble resolution of my friends:
That were more vile.

Enter two FRIENDS *of* CAPTAIN AGER.

<They're here: kill me, my shame!
I am not for the fellowship of honor.>
1 FR. Captain! fie, come, sir! we've been seeking for you [401

Very late to-day; this was not wont to be:
Your enemy's i' th' field.
CAP. AGER. Truth enters cheerfully.
2 FR. Good faith, sir, you've a royal quarrel on't.
CAP. AGER. Yes, in some other country, Spain or Italy,
It would be held so.
1 FR. How? and is't not here so?
CAP. AGER. 'Tis not so contumeliously received
In these parts, an you mark it.
1 FR. Not in these?
Why, prithee, what is more, or can be?
CAP. AGER. Yes;
That ordinary commotioner, the lie,
Is father of most quarrels in this climate,
And held here capital, an you go to that.
2 FR. But, sir, I hope you will not go to that,
Or change your own for it: "son of a whore!"
Why, there's the lie down to posterity,
The lie to birth, the lie to honesty.
Why would you cozen yourself so, and beguile
So brave a cause, manhood's best masterpiece?
Do you e'er hope for one so brave again?
CAP. AGER. Consider then the man, [the] colönel,
Exactly worthy, absolutely noble,
However spleen and rage abuses him;
And 'tis not well or manly to pursue
A man's infirmity.
1 FR. O miracle!
So hopeful, valiant, and complete a captain,
Possessed with a tame devil! Come out! thou spoilest
The most improved young soldier of seven kingdoms;
Made captain at nineteen; which was deserved
The year before; but honor comes behind still:
Come out, I say! This was not wont to be;
That spirit ne'er stood in need of provocation;
Nor shall it now: away, sir!
CAP. AGER. Urge me not.
1 FR. By manhood's reverend honor, but we must!
CAP. AGER. I will not fight a stroke.
1 FR. O blasphemy
To sacred valor!
CAP. AGER. Lead me where you list.
1 FR. Pardon this traitorous slumber, clogged with evils:
Give captains rather wives than such tame devils! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II (R)

JANE, *in her room in her father's house, is being interviewed by the* PHYSICIAN, *to whom she displays no readiness to speak frankly as to her condition.*

PHY. Nay, mistress, you must not be covered[3] to me:
The patiënt must ope to the physician
All her dearest sorrows: art is blinded else,
And cannot show her mystical effects.
JANE. Can art be so dim-sighted, learnëd sir?
I did not think her so incapaciöus.
You train me, as I guess, like a conjuror,
One of our fine oraculous wizards,
Who, from the help of his examinant,
By the near guess of his suspiciön,
Points out the thief by the marks he tells him.
Have you no skill in physiognomy?
What color, says your coat, is my disease?
I am unmarried, and it cannot be yellow;
If it be maiden-green, you cannot miss it.
PHY. I cannot see that vacuum in your blood:
But, gentlewoman, if you love yourself,
Love my advice; be free and plain with me:
Where lies your grief?
JANE. Where lies my grief indeed?
I cannot tell the truth, where my grief lies,
But my joy is imprisoned.
PHY. This is mystical!
JANE. Lord, what plain questions you make problems of!

[3] must be frank.

Your art is such a regular highway,
That, put you out of it, and you are lost:
My heart's imprisoned in my body, sir;
There is all my joy; and my sorrow too
Lies very near it.
PHY. They are bad adjuncts;
Your joy and grief, lying so near together,
Can propagate no happy issue: remove
The one, and let it be the worst—your grief—
If you'll propose the best unto your joy.
JANE. Why, now comes your skill: what physic for it?
PHY. Now I have found you out; you are in love.
JANE. I think I am: what's your appliance now?
Can all your Paracelsian mixtures cure it?
'T must be a surgeon of the civil law,
I fear, that must cure me.
PHY. Gentlewoman,
If you knew well my heart, you would not be
So circular; the very common name
Of physician might reprove your niceness;
We are as secret as your cónfessors,
And as firm obliged; 'tis a fine like death
For us to blab.
JANE. I will trust you; yet, sir,
I'd rather do it by attorney to you;
I else have blushes that will stop my tongue:
Have you no friend so friendly as yourself,
Of mine own sex, to whom I might impart
My sorrows to you at the second hand?
PHY. Why, la, there I hit you! and be confirmed
I'll give you such a bosom-counsellor,
That your own tongue shall be sooner false to you.
Make yourself unready,[4] and be naked to her;
I'll fetch her presently. [*Exit.*
JANE. I must reveal;
My shame will else take tongue, and speak before me;

[4] undress yourself.

'Tis a necessity impulsive drives me.
O, my hard fate, but my more hard father,
That father of my fate!—a father, said I?
What a strange paradox I run into!
I must accuse two fathers of my fate
And fault, a reciprocal generatiön:
The father of my fault would have repaired
His faulty issue, but my fate's father hinders it:
Then fate and fault, wherever I begin,
I must blame both, and yet 'twas love did sin.

Re-enter PHYSICIAN *with* ANNE.

PHY. Look you, mistress, here's your closet; put in
What you please, you ever keep the key of it.
JANE. Let me speak private, sir.
PHY. With all my heart;
I will be more than mine ears' length from you. [*Retires.*
JANE. You hold some endeared place with this gentleman?
ANNE. He is my brother, forsooth; I, his creature;
He does command me any lawful office,
Either in act or counsel.
JANE. I must not doubt you;
Your brother has protested secrecy,
And strengthened me in you: I must lay ope
A guilty sorrow to you; I'm with child.
'Tis no black swan I show you; these spots stick
Upon the face of many go for maids:
I that had face enough to do the deed,
Cannot want tongue to speak it; but 'tis to you,
Whom I accept my helper.
ANNE. Mistress, 'tis locked
Within a castle that's invincible:
It is too late to wish it were undone.
JANE. I've scarce a wish within myself so strong,
For, understand me, 'tis not all so ill
As you may yet conceit it: this deed was done

When Heaven had witness to the jugal[5] knot;
Only the barren ceremony wants,
Which by an adverse father is abridged.
ANNE. Would my pity could help you!
JANE. Your counsel may.
My father yet shoots widest from my sorrow,
And, with a care indulgent, seeing me changed
From what I was, sends for your good brother
To find my grief, and practise remedy:
You know it, give it him; but, if a fourth
Be added to this council, I will say
Ye're worse than you can call me at the worst,
At this advantage of my reputation.
ANNE. I will revive a reputatiön
That women long has lost; I will keep counsel:
I'll only now oblige my teeth to you,
And they shall bite the blabber, if it offer
To breathe on an offending syllable.
JANE. I trust you; go, whisper. Here comes my father.

Enter RUSSELL, CHOUGH, *and* TRIMTRAM.

RUS. Sir, you are welcome, more, and most welcome,
All the degrees of welcome; thrice welcome, sir.
CHOUGH. Is this your daughter, sir?
RUS. Mine only joy, sir.
CHOUGH. I'll show her the Cornish hug, sir. [*Embraces her.*] I have kissed you now, sweetheart, and I never do any kindness to my friends but I use to hit 'em in the teeth with it presently.
TRIM. My name is Trimtram, forsooth; look, what my master does, I use to do the like. [*Attempts to kiss* ANNE.
ANNE. You are deceived, sir; I am not this gentlewoman's servant, to make your courtesy equal.
CHOUGH. You do not know me, mistress?
JANE. No, indeed. <I doubt I shall learn too soon.>
CHOUGH. My name is Chough, a Cornish gentlemen; my man's mine own countrymen too, i' faith: I warrant you took us for some of the small islanders.
JANE. I did indeed, between the Scotch and Irish.
CHOUGH. Red-shanks? I thought so, by my truth: no, truly,
We are right Cornish diamonds.
TRIM. Yes, we cut
Out quarrels[6] and break glasses where we go.
PHY., *to* ANNE, *with whom he has been conversing apart.* <If it be hidden from her father, yet
His ignorance understands well his knowledge,
For this I guess to be some rich coxcomb
He'd put upon his daughter.
ANNE. That's plainly so.
PHY. Then only she's beholding to our help
For the close delivery of her burden,
Else all's overthrown.
ANNE. And, pray, be faithful in that, sir.
PHY. Tush, we physicians are the truest alchemists,
That from the ore and dross of sin
Can new distil a maidenhead again.>
RUS. How do you like her, sir?
CHOUGH. Troth, I do like her, sir, in the way of comparison, to anything that a man would desire; I am as high as the Mount in love with her already, and that's as far as I can go by land; but I hope to go farther by water with her one day.
RUS. I tell you, sir, she has lost some color
By wrestling with a peevish sickness now of late.
CHOUGH. Wrestle? nay, an she love wrestling, I'll teach her a trick to overthrow any peevish sickness in London, whate'er it be.
RUS. Well, she had a rich beauty, though I say't;
Nor is it lost; a little thing repairs it.
CHOUGH. She shall command the best thing that I have,
In Middlesex, i'faith.

[5] conjugal.
[6] diamond-shaped panes of glass.

Rus. Well, sir, talk with her; [240
Give her a relish of your good liking to her;
You shall have time and free access to finish
What you now begin.

Jane. <What means my father? my love's unjust restraint,
My shame, were it published, both together [249
Could not afflict me like this odious fool:
Now I see why he hated my Fitzallen.>

Chough. Sweet lady, your father says you are a wrestler: if you love that sport, I love you the better: i'faith, I love it as well as I love my meat after supper; 'tis indeed meat, drink, and cloth to me.

Jane. Methinks it should tear your clothes, sir.

Chough. Not a rag, i'faith.—Trimtram, hold my cloak.—[*Gives his cloak to* Trimtram.]—I'll wrestle a fall with [261 you now; I'll show you a trick that you never saw in your life.

Jane. O, good sir, forbear! I am no wrestler.

Phy. Good, sir, take heed, you'll hurt the gentlewoman.

Chough. I will not catch beneath the waist, believe it;
I know fair play. [270

Jane. 'Tis no woman's exercise in London, sir.

Chough. I'll ne'er believe that: the hug and the lock between man and woman, with a fair fall, is as sweet an exercise for the body as you'll desire in a summer's evening.

Phy. Sir, the gentlewoman is not well.

Chough. It may be you are a physician, sir? [280

Phy. 'Tis so, sir.

Chough. I say, then, and I'll stand to't, three ounces of wrestling with two hips, a yard of a green gown put together in the inturn, is as good a medicine for the green sickness as ever breathed.

Trim. Come, sir, take your cloak again; I see here will be ne'er a match. [*Returns the cloak.* [289

Jane. <A match? I had rather be matched from a musket's mouth, and shot unto my death.>

Chough. I'll wrestle with any man for a good supper.

Trim. Ay, marry, sir, I'll take your part there, catch that catch may.

Phy., *who has been talking aside to* Russell. <Sir, she is willing to't: there at my house [299
She shall be private, and near to my attendance:
I know you'll not mistrust my faithful care;
I shall return her soon and perfectly.

Rus. Take your charge, sir.> Go with this gentleman, Jane;
<But, prithee, look well this way ere thou go'st;
'Tis a rich simplicity of great estate, [309
A thing that will be ruled, and thou shalt rule;
Consider of your sex's general aim,
That domination is a woman's Heaven.

Jane. I'll think on't, sir.>

Rus. My daughter is retiring, sir.

Chough. I will part at Dartmouth with her, sir. [*Kisses her.*]—O that thou didst but love wrestling! I would give any man three foils on that condition! [319

Trim. There's three sorts of men that would thank you for 'em, either cutlers, fencers, or players.

Rus. Sir, as I began I end—wondrous welcome! [*Exeunt all except* Chough *and* Trimtram.

Trim. What, will you go to school today? you are entered, you know, and your quarterage runs on.

Chough. What, to the roaring school? pox on't, 'tis such a damnable noise, I [330 shall never attain it neither. I do wonder they have never a wrestling school; that were worth twenty of your fencing or dancing schools.

Trim. Well, you must learn to roar[7] here in London; you'll never proceed in the reputation of gallantry else.

Chough. How long has roaring been an exercise, thinkest thou, Trimtram?

Trim. Ever since guns came up; the first was your roaring Meg. [341

[7] to behave like a hectoring bully.

CHOUGH. Meg? then 'twas a woman was the first roarer?

TRIM. Ay, a fire of her touch-hole, that cost many a proper man's life since that time; and then the lions, they learnt it from the guns, living so near 'em; then it was heard to the Bankside, and the bears they began to roar; then the boys got it, and so ever since there have been a company of roaring boys. [351

CHOUGH. And how long will it last, thinkest thou?

TRIM. As long as the water runs under London Bridge, or watermen ply at Westminster stairs.

CHOUGH. Well, I will begin to roar too, since it is in fashion. O, Corineus, this was not in thy time! I should have heard on't by the tradition of mine an- [360 cestors—for I'm sure there were Choughs in thy days—if it had been so: when Hercules and thou wert on the Olympic Mount together, then was wrestling in request.

TRIM. Ay, and that Mount is now the Mount in Cornwall: Corineus brought it thither under one of his arms, they say.

CHOUGH. O Corineus, my predecessor, that I had but lived in those days [370 to see thee wrestle! on that condition I had died seven year ago.

TRIM. Nay, it should have been a dozen at least, i' faith, on that condition.

[*Exeunt.*

ACT THREE

SCENE I (M)

CAPTAIN AGER, *very much against his will, has been brought to the field by his* FRIENDS *for his duel with the* COLONEL; *but he has no intention of fighting it.*

CAP. AGER. Well, your wills now?

1 FR. OF CAP. Our wills? our loves, our duties
To honored fortitude: what wills have we
But our desires to nobleness and merit,
Valor's advancement, and the sacred rectitude [11
Due to a valorous cause?

CAP AGER. O, that's not mine!

2 FR. OF CAP. War has his court of justice; that's the field,
Where all cases of manhood are determined,
And your case is no mean one.

CAP. AGER. <True; then 'twere virtuous; [20
But mine is in extremes, foul and unjust.>
Well, now you've got me hither, you're as far
To seek in your desire as at first minute;
For, by the strength and honor of a vow,
I will not lift a finger in this quarrel.

1 FR. OF CAP. How? not in this? be not so rash a sinner: [29
Why, sir, do you ever hope to fight again then?
Take heed on't; you must never look for that:
Why, the universal stock of the world's injury
Will be too poor to find a quarrel for you.
Give up your right and title to desert, sir:
If you fail Virtue here, she needs you not
All your time after; let her take this wrong, [41
And never presume then to serve her more:
Bid farewell to th' integrity of arms,
And let that honorable name of soldier
Fall from you like a shivered wreath of laurel
By thunder struck from a desertless forehead, [49
That wears another's right by usurpation.
Good captain, do not willfully cast away
At one hour all the fame your life has won:
This is your native seat; here you should seek
Most to preserve it; or if you will dote
So much on life—poor life, which in respect
Of life in honor is but death and darkness— [60
That you will prove neglectful of yourself,
Which is to me too fearful to imagine,

Yet for that virtuous lady's cause, your mother,
Her reputation dear to nobleness
As grace to penitence, whose fair memory
E'en crowns fame in your issue, for that blessedness
Give not this ill place, but in spite of hell,
And all her base fears, be exactly valiant.

CAP. AGER. O, O!

2 FR. OF CAP. Why, well said, there's fair hope in that;
Another such a one!

CAP. AGER. Came they in thousands, 'Tis all against you.

1 FR. OF CAP. Then, poor friendless merit,
Heaven be good to thee! thy professor leaves thee.

Enter the COLONEL *and two* FRIENDS.

He's come; do but you draw, we'll fight it for you.

CAP. AGER. I know too much to grant that.

1 FR. OF CAP. O dead manhood!
Had ever such a cause so faint a servant?
Shame brand me if I do not suffer for him!

COL. I've heard, sir, you've been guilty of much boasting
For your brave earliness at such a meeting:
You've lost the glory of that way this morning;
I was the first to-day.

CAP. AGER. So were you ever
In my respect, sir.

1 FR. OF CAP. <O most base præludium!>

CAP. AGER. I never thought on Victory, our mistress,
With greater reverence than I have your worth,
Nor ever loved her better.

1 FR. OF CAP. <'Slight, I could knock
His brains 'bout his heels, methinks!

2 FR. OF CAP. Peace, prithee, peace.>

CAP. AGER. Success in you has been my absolute joy;
And when I've wished content, I've wished your friendship.

1 FR. OF CAP. <Stay, let me but run him through the tongue a little;
There's lawyer's blood in't; you shall see foul gear straight.

2 FR. OF CAP. Come, you're as mad now as he's cowardous.>

COL. I came not hither, sir, for an encomium.

1 FR. OF CAP. <No, the more coxcomb he that claws the head
Of your vainglory with't!>

COL. I came provided
For storms and tempests, and the foulest season
That ever rage let forth or blew in wildness
From the incensëd prison of man's blood.

CAP. AGER. 'Tis otherwise with me; I come with mildness,
Peace, constant amity, and calm forgiveness,
The weather of a Christian and a friend.

1 FR. OF CAP. <Give me a valiant Turk, though not worth tenpence, rather.>

CAP. AGER. Yet, sir, the world will judge the injury mine,
Insufferably mine, mine beyond injury:
Thousands have made a less wrong reach to hell,
Ay, and rejoiced in his most endless vengeance,
A miserable triumph, though a just one!
But when I call to memory our long friendship,
Methinks it cannot be too great a wrong
That then I should not pardon. Why should man,
For a poor hasty syllable or two,
And vented only in forgetful fury,
Chain all the hopes and riches of his soul
To the revenge of that, die lost for ever?
For he that makes his last peace with his Maker
In anger, anger is his peace eternally:
He must expect the same return again
Whose venture is deceitful; must he not, sir?

COL. I see what I must do, fairly put up again;

For here'll be nothing done; I perceive that.
CAP. AGER. What shall be done in such a worthless business
But to be sorry, and to be forgiven; [169
You, sir, to bring repentance, and I pardon?
COL. I bring repentance, sir?
CAP. AGER. If't be too much
To say repentance, call it what you please, sir;
Choose your own word: I know you're sorry for't,
And that's as good.
COL. I sorry? by fame's honor, I am wronged! [180
Do you seek for peace, and draw the quarrel larger?
CAP. AGER. Then 'tis I am sorry that I thought you so.
1 FR. OF CAP. <A captain! I could gnaw his title off.>
CAP. AGER. Nor is it any misbecoming virtue, sir,
In the best manliness to repent a wrong,
Which made me bold with you. [190
1 FR. OF CAP. <I could cuff his head off.
2 FR. OF CAP. Nay, pish!
1 FR. OF CAP. Pox on him, I could eat his buttock baked, methinks.>
COL., *sheathing his sword.* So, once again take thou thy peaceful rest, then;
But, as I put thee up, I must proclaim
This captain here, both to his friends and mine, [201
That only came to see fair valor righted,
A base, submissive coward; so I leave him. [*Offers to go away.*
CAP. AGER. <O, Heaven has pitied my excessive patience,
And sent me a cause! now I have a cause;
A coward I was never.> Come you back, sir! [210
COL. How?
CAP. AGER. You left a "coward" here.
COL. Yes, sir, with you.
CAP. AGER. 'Tis such base metal, sir, 'twill not be taken;
It must home again with you.
2 FR. OF CAP. <Should this be true now!
1 FR. OF CAP. Impossible! "coward" do more than "bastard"?> [220
COL. I prithee mock me not; take heed you do not;
For, if I draw once more, I shall grow terrible,
And rage will force me do what will grieve honor.
CAP. AGER. Ha, ha, ha!
COL. He smiles; dare it be he?—What think you, gentlemen? [229
Your judgments? shall I not be cozened in him?
This cannot be the man: why, he was bookish,
Made an invective lately against fighting,
A thing, in troth, that moved a little with me,
Put up a fouler contumely far
Than thousand "cowards" came to, and grew thankful. [239
CAP. AGER. Blessëd remembrance in time of need!
I'd lost my honor else.
2 FR. OF CAP. <Do you note his joy?>
CAP. AGER. I never felt a more severe necessity;
Then came thy excellent pity. Not yet ready?
Have you such confidence in my just manhood [249
That you dare so long trust me, and yet tempt me
Beyond the toleration of man's virtue?
Why, would you be more cruel than your injury?
Do you first take pride to wrong me, and then think me
Not worth your fury? do not use me so;
I shall deceive you then. Sir, either draw, [259
And that not slightingly, but with the care
Of your best preservation, with that watchfulness
As you'd defend yourself from circular fire,

Your sin's rage, or her lord—this will require it—
Or you'll be too soon lost, for I've an anger [269
Has gathered mighty strength against you, mighty;
Yet you shall find it honest to the last,
Noble and fair.

COL. I'll venture't once again;
And if't be but as true as it is wondrous,
I shall have that I come for.—Your leave, gentlemen.

1 FR. OF CAP. <If he should do't indeed, and deceive's all now! [*The* COLONEL *and* CAPTAIN AGER *fight.*
Stay, by this hand he offers—fights, [281
i' faith!
Fights, by this light, he fights, sir!

2 FR. OF CAP. So methinks, sir.>

1 FR. OF CAP. An absolute punto, hey?

2 FR. OF CAP. 'Twas a passado, sir.

1 FR. OF CAP. Why, let it pass, an 'twas; I'm sure 'twas somewhat.
What's that now?

2 FR. OF CAP. That's a punto. [290

1 FR. OF CAP. O, go to, then;
I knew 'twas not far off. What a world's this!
Is "coward" a more stirring meat than "bastard," my masters?
Put in more eggs, for shame, when you get children,
And make it true court-custard.—Ho, I honor thee! [299
'Tis right and fair; and he that breathes against it,
He breathes against the justice of a man;
And man to cut him off 'tis no injustice.
[*The* COLONEL *falls.*
Thanks, thanks for this most unexpected nobleness!

CAP. AGER. Truth never fails her servant, sir, nor leaves him
With the day's shame upon him.

1 FR. OF CAP. Thou'st redeemed [310
Thy worth to the same height 'twas first esteemed. [*Exit* CAPTAIN AGER *with his* FRIENDS.

1 FR. OF COL. Alas, how is it, sir? give us some hope
Of your stay with us: let your spirit be seen
Above your fortune; the best fortitude
Has been of fate ill-friended: now force your empire, [320
And reign above your blood, spite of dejection;
Reduce[1] the monarchy of your abler mind,
Let not flesh straiten it.

COL. O, just Heaven has found me,
And turned the stings of my too hasty injuries
Into my own blood! I pursued my ruin,
And urged him past the patience of an angel: [331
Could man's revenge extend beyond man's life,
This would ha' waked it. If this flame will light me
But till I see my sister, 'tis a kind one;
More I expect not from't. Noble deserver!
Farewell, most valiant and most wronged of men; [340
Do but forgive me, and I'm victor then.
[*Exit, led off by his* FRIENDS.

SCENE II (R)

JANE *has given birth to a child in the* PHYSICIAN'S *house and has made a good recovery. We see her now with the* PHYSICIAN, ANNE, *and a* DUTCH NURSE, *who is carrying the child.*

PHY. Sweet fro,[2] to your most indulgent care
Take this my heart's joy; I must not tell you
The value of this jewel in my bosom. [10

NURSE. Dat you may vell, sir; der can niet forstoore you.

PHY. Indeed I cannot tell you; you know, nurse,
These are above the quantity of price:
Where is the glory of the goodliest trees
But in the fruit and branches? the old stock
Must decay; and sprigs, scions such as these, [20

[1] restore.
[2] Dutch, *frow*, woman.

Must become new stocks, for us to glory
In their fruitful issue; so we are made
Immortal one by other.

NURSE. You spreek a most lieben fader, and ich sall do de best of tender nurses to dis infant, my pretty frokin.

PHY. I know you will be loving: here, sweet friend; [*Gives money.*
Here's earnest of a large sum of love and coin [30
To quit [3] your tender care.

JANE. I have some reason too
To purchase your dear care unto this infant. [*Gives money.*

NURSE. You be de witness of de baptim, dat is, as you spreken, de godimother, ich vell forstoore it so.

JANE. Yes. <I'm the bad mother, if it be offence.>

ANNE. I must be a little kind too. [40
[*Gives money.*

NURSE. Much tanks to you all! dis child is much beloven; and ich sall see much care over it.

PHY. Farewell.—Good sister, show her the way forth.—
I shall often visit you, kind nurse.

NURSE. You sall be velcome.
[*Exeunt* ANNE *and* NURSE. [49

JANE. O sir, what a friend have I found in you!
Where my poor power shall stay in the requital,
Yourself must from your fair conditiön [4]
Make up in mere acceptance of my will.

PHY. O, pray you, urge it not! we are not born
For ourselves only; self-love is a sin;
But in our loving donatives to others [59
Man's virtue best consists: love all begets;
Without, all are adulterate and counterfeit.

JANE. Your boundless love I cannot satisfy
But with a mental memory of your virtues:
Yet let me not engage your cost withal;
Beseech you then take restitutiön [69
Of pains and bounty which you have disbursed
For your poor debtor.

PHY. You will not offer it?
Do not esteem my love so mercenary
To be the hire of coin: sure, I shall think
You do not hold so worthily of me
As I wish to deserve.

JANE. Not recompense?
Then you will beggar me with too much credit: [80
Is't not sufficient you preserve my name,
Which I had forfeited to shame and scorn,
Cover my vices with a veil of love,
Defend and keep me from a father's rage,
Whose love yet infinite, not knowing this,
Might, knowing, turn a hate as infinite?
Sure he would throw me ever from his blessings, [89
And cast his curses on me! Yes, further,
Your secrecy keeps me in the state of woman;
For else what husband would choose me his wife,
Knowing the honor of a bride were lost?
I cannot number half the good you do me
In the concealed retention of my sin;
Then make me not worse than I was before, [100
In my ingratitude, good sir.

PHY. Again?
I shall repent my love, if you'll so call't,
To be made such a hackney: give me coin?
I had as lief you gave me poison, lady,
For I have art and antidotes 'gainst that;
I might take that; but this I will refuse.

JANE. Will you then teach me how I may requite you [110
In some small quantity?

PHY. <'Twas that I looked for.>
Yes, I will tell you, lady, a full quittance,
And how you may become my creditress.

JANE. I beseech you, do, sir!

PHY. Indeed I will, lady:
Not in coin, mistress; for silver, though white,
Yet it draws black lines; it shall not rule my palm, [120
There to mark forth his base corruptiön:
Pay me again in the same quality

[3] requite. [4] disposition.

That I to you tendered,—that is, love for love.
Can you love me, lady? you have confessed
My love to you.
JANE. Most amply.
PHY. Why, faith, then,
Pay me back that way.
JANE. How do you mean, sir?
PHY. Tush, our meanings are better understood
Than shifted to the tongue; it brings along
A little blabbing blood into our cheeks,
That shames us when we speak.
JANE. I understand you not.
PHY. Fie, you do; make not yourself ignorant
In what you know; you have ta'en forth the lesson
That I would read to you.
JANE. Sure then I need not
Read it again, sir.
PHY. Yes, it makes perfect:
You know the way unto Achilles' spear;
If that hurt you, I have the cure, you see.
JANE. Come, you're a good man; I do perceive you:
You put a trial to me; I thank you;
You are my just confessor, and, believe me,
I'll have no further penance for this sin.
Convert a year unto a lasting ever,
And call't Apollo's smile: 'twas once, then never.
PHY. Pray you, mistake me not; indeed I love you.
JANE. Indeed? what deed?
PHY. The deed that you have done.
JANE. I cannot believe you.
PHY. Believe the deed then!
JANE. Away, you are a blackamoor! you love me?
I hate you for your love! Are you the man
That in your painted outside seemed so white?
O, you're a foul dissembling hypocrite!
You saved me from a thief, that yourself might rob me;
Skinned over a green wound, to breed an ulcer:
Is this the practice of your physic-college?
PHY. Have you yet uttered all your niceness forth?
If you have more, vent it; certes, I think
Your first grant was not yielded with less pain;
If 'twere, you have your price; yield it again.
JANE. Pray you, tell me, sir—I asked it before—
Is it a practice amongst you physicians?
PHY. Tush, that's a secret; we cast all waters:
Should I reveal, you would mistrust my counsel:
The lawyer and physician here agrees,
To women-clients they give back their fees;
And is not that kindness?
JANE. This for thy love!
[*Spits at him.*
Out, outside of a man! thou cinnamon-tree,
That but thy bark hast nothing good about thee!
The unicorn is hunted for his horn,
The rest is left for carrion: thou false man,
Thou'st fished with silver hooks and golden baits;
But I'll avoid all thy deceiving sleights.
PHY. Do what you list, I will do something too;
Remember yet what I have done for you:
You have a good face now, but 'twill grow rugged;
Ere you grow old, old men will despise you:
Think on your grandame Helen, the fairest queen;
When in a new glass she spied her old face,
She, smiling, wept to think upon the change.
Take your time; you're crazed; you're an apple fallen
From the tree; if you be kept long, you'll rot.

Study your answer well: yet I love you;
If you refuse, I have a hand above [you].
[*Exit.*
JANE. Poison thyself, thou foul empoisoner!
Of thine own practique drink the theory!
What a white devil have I met withal!
What shall I do?—what do? is it a [231
question?
Nor shame, nor hate, nor fear, nor lust, nor force,
Now being too bad, shall ever make me worse.

Re-enter ANNE.

<What have we here? a second spirit?>
ANNE. Mistress,
I am sent to you. [240
JANE. Is your message good?
ANNE. As you receive it:
My brother sent me; and you know he loves you.
JANE. I heard say so; but 'twas a false report.
ANNE. Pray, pardon me, I must do my message;
Who lives commanded must obey his keeper: [250
I must persuade you to this act of woman.
JANE. Woman? of strumpet!
ANNE. Indeed, of strumpet;
He takes you at advantage of your fall,
Seeing you down before.
JANE. Curse on his feignëd smiles!
ANNE. He's my brother, mistress; and a curse on you, [259
If e'er you bless him with that cursëd deed!
Hang him, poison him! he held out a rose,
To draw the yielding sense, which, come to hand,
He shifts, and gives a canker.[5]
JANE. You speak well yet.
ANNE. Ay, but, mistress, now I consider it,
Your reputatiön lies at his mercy; [270
Your fault dwells in his breast; say he throw't out,
It will be known; how are you then undone!
Think on't, your good name; and they're not to be sold
In every market: a good name is dear,
And indeed more esteemëd than our actions,
By which we should deserve it. [280
JANE. Ay me, most wretched!
ANNE. What? do you shrink at that?
Would you not wear one spot upon your face
To keep your whole body from a leprosy,
Though it were undiscovered ever? Hang him!
Fear him not: horse leeches suck out his corrupt blood! [289
Draw you none from him, 'less it be pure and good.
JANE. Do you speak your soul?
ANNE. By my soul do I!
JANE. Then yet I have a friend: but thus exhort me,
And I have still a column to support me.
ANNE. One fault
Heaven soon forgives, and 'tis on earth forgot; [299
The moon herself is not without one spot.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III (M)

LADY AGER *is worried about her son and about the result of her false confession to him. She has had Servants out looking for him. Entering a room in her house, she meets a* SERVANT, *whom she at once proceeds to question about the* CAPTAIN'S *whereabouts.*

LADY AGER. Now, sir, where is he? speak, why comes he not? [9
I sent you for him. <Bless this fellow's senses!
What has he seen? a soul nine hours entranced,
Hovering 'twixt hell and Heaven, could not wake ghastlier.>
Not yet return an answer?—

Enter a SECOND SERVANT.

What say you, sir?
Where is he?

[5] dog-rose.

2 Serv. Gone. [20
Lady Ager. What say'st thou!
2 Serv. He is gone, madam;
But, as we heard, unwillingly he went
As ever blood enforced.
Lady Ager. Went? whither went he?
2 Serv. Madam, I fear I ha' said too much already.
Lady Ager. <These men are both agreed.> —Speak, whither went he? [30
2 Serv. Why, to—I would you'd think the rest yourself, madam.
Lady Ager. Meek patience bless me!
2 Serv. To the field.
1 Serv. To fight, madam.
Lady Ager. To fight?
1 Serv. There came two urging gentlemen,
That called themselves his seconds; both so powerful [40
As, 'tis reported, they prevailed with him
With little labor.
Lady Ager. <O, he's lost, he's gone!
For all my pains, he's gone! two meeting torrents
Are not so merciless as their two rages:
He never comes again. Wretched affection!
Have I belied my faith, injured my goodness, [50
Slandered my honor for his preservation,
Having but only him, and yet no happier?
'Tis then a judgment plain; Truth's angry with me,
In that I would abuse her sacred whiteness
For any worldly temporal respect.—
Forgive me then, thou glorious woman's virtue, [60
Admired where'er thy habitation is,
Especially in us weak ones! O, forgive me,
For 'tis thy vengeance, this! To belie truth,
Which is so hardly ours, with such pain purchased,
Fastings and prayers, continence and care, [69
Misery must needs ensue. Let him not die
In that unchaste belief of his false birth
And my disgrace! whatever angel guides him,
May this request be with my tears obtained:
Let his soul know my honor is unstained!>
Run, seek away! if there be any hope,
Let me not lose him yet. [*Exeunt* Servants.] When I think on him, [81
His dearness and his worth, it earns[6] me more:
They that know riches tremble to be poor.
My passion is not every woman's sorrow:
She must be truly honest feels my grief,
And only known to one; if such there be,
They know the sorrow that oppresseth me. [*Exit.* [90

ACT FOUR

Scene I (R)

Chough *and* Trimtram *are at the Roaring School, of which the* Colonel's Friend *is the presiding genius. He,* Vapor, *and several* Roarers *are present, also an* Usher.

Col's Fr. Truth, sir, I must needs blame you for a truant, having but one lesson read to you, and neglect so soon; fie, I must see you once a day at least. [9
Chough. Would I were whipped, tutor, if it were not 'long of my man Trimtram here!
Trim. Who, of me?
Chough. <Take't upon thee, Trim; I'll give thee five shillings, as I am a gentleman.
Trim. I'll see you whipped first.—Well, I will too.> Faith, sir, I saw he was not perfect, and I was loth he should come before, to shame himself. [20
Col.'s Fr. How? shame, sir? is it a shame for scholars to learn? Sir, there are great scholars that are but slenderly read in our profession: sir, first it must be economical, then ecumenical: shame

[6] yearns.

not to practise in the house how to perform in the field: the nail that is driven takes a little hold at the first stroke, but more at the second, and more at the third; but, when 'tis home to the head, then 'tis firm. [31

Chough. Faith, I have been driving it home to the head this two days.

Trim. I helped to hammer it in as well as I could too, sir.

Col.'s Fr. Well, sir, I will hear you rehearse anon: meantime peruse the exemplary of my bills, and tell me in what language I shall roar a lecture to you; or I'll read to you the mathematical science of roaring. [41

Chough. Is it mathematical?

Col.'s Fr. O, sir, does not the wind roar, the sea roar, the welkin roar? Indeed most things do roar by nature; and is not the knowledge of these things mathematical?

Chough. Pray, proceed, sir.

Col.'s Fr., *reading*. "The names of the languages, the Sclavonian, Partha- [50 menian, Barmeothian, Tyburnian, Wappinganian, or the modern Londonian: any man or woman that is desirous to roar in any of these languages, in a week they shall be perfect if they will take pains; so let 'em repair into Holburn to the sign of the Cheat-loaf."

Chough. Now your bill speaks of that I was wondering a good while at, your sign; the loaf looks very like bread, i' [60 faith, but why is it called the Cheat-loaf?

Col.'s Fr. This house was sometimes a baker's, sir, that served the court, where the bread is called cheat.

Trim. Ay, ay, 'twas a baker that cheated the court with bread.

Col.'s Fr. Well, sir, choose your languages; and your lectures shall be read, between my usher and myself, for your better instruction, provided your con- [70 ditions be performed in the premises beforesaid.

Chough. Look you, sir, there's twenty pound in hand, and twenty more I am to pay when I am allowed a sufficient roarer. [*Gives money.*

Col.'s Fr. You speak in good earnest, sir?

Chough. Yes, faith, do I: Trimtram shall be my witness. [80

Trim. Yes, indeed, sir, twenty pound is very good earnest.

Ush. Sir, one thing I must tell you belongs to my place: you are the youngest scholar; and till another comes under you, there is a certain garnish belongs to the school; for in our practice we grow to a quarrel; then there must be wine ready to make all friends, for that's the end of roaring; 'tis valiant, but harmless; and this charge is yours. [91

Chough. With all my heart, i' faith, and I like it the better because no blood comes on it: who shall fetch?

1 Roar. I'll be your spaniel, sir.

Col.'s Fr. Bid Vapor bring some tobacco too.

Chough. Do, and here's money for't.

Ush. No, you shall not; let me see the money: so, [*takes the money*] I'll keep it, and discharge him after the combat. [101 [*Exit* First Roarer.] For your practice' sake, you and your man shall roar him out on't—for indeed you must pay your debts so, for that's one of the main ends of roaring—and when you have left him in a chafe, then I'll qualify the rascal.

Chough. Content.—I' faith, Trim, we'll roar the rusty rascal out of his tobacco. [110

Trim. Ay, an he had the best craccus in London.

Col.'s Fr. Observe, sir, we could now roar in the Sclavonian language, but this practice hath been a little sublime, some hair's-breadth or so above your caput; I take it, for your use and understanding both, it were fitter for you to taste the modern assault, only the Londonian roar.

Chough. I' faith, sir, that's for my [120 purpose, for I shall use all my roaring here in London: in Cornwall we are all for wrestling; and I do not mean to travel over sea to roar there.

Col.'s Fr. Observe then, sir;—but it were necessary you took forth your tables,[1] to note the most difficult points

[1] tablet.

for the better assistance of your memory.

CHOUGH. Nay, sir, my man and I keep two tables. [130

TRIM. Ay, sir, and as many trenchers, cats' meat and dogs' meat enough.

COL.'S FR. Note, sir.—Dost thou confront my cyclops?

USH. With a Briarean brousted.

CHOUGH, *writing*. "Cyclops."

TRIM., *writing*. "Briarean."

COL.'S FR. I know thee and thy lineal pedigree. [139

USH. It is collateral, as Brutus and Posthumus.

TRIM., *writing*. "Brutus."

CHOUGH, *writing*. "Posthumus."

COL.'S FR. False as the face of Hecate! thy sister is a—

USH. What is my sister, centaur?

COL.'S FR. I say thy sister is a bronstrops.[2]

USH. A bronstrops? [149

CHOUGH. Tutor, tutor, ere you go any further, tell me the English of that; what is a bronstrops, pray?

COL.'S FR. A bronstrops is in English a hippocrene.

CHOUGH. A hippocrene; note it, Trim: I love to understand the English as I go. [*Writes.*

TRIM. What's the English of hippocrene?

CHOUGH. Why, bonstrops. [160

USH. Thou dost obtrect[3] my flesh and blood.

COL.'S FR. Again I denounce; thy sister is a fructifer.

CHOUGH. What's that, tutor?

COL'S FR. That is in English a fucus or a minotaur.

CHOUGH, *writing*. "A minotaur."

TRIM., *writing*. "A fucus." [169

USH. I say thy mother is a callicut, a panagron, a duplar, and a sindicus.

COL.'S FR. Dislocate thy bladud![4]

USH. Bladud shall conjure, if his demons once appear.

Re-enter FIRST ROARER *with wine, followed by* VAPOR *with tobacco.*

COL.'S FR. Advance thy respondency.

CHOUGH. Nay, good gentlemen, do not fall out.—A cup of wine quickly, Trimtram! [180

USH. See, my steel hath a glister!

CHOUGH. Pray wipe him, and put him up again, good usher.

USH. Sir, at your request I pull down the flag of defiance.

COL.'S FR. Give me a bowl of wine, my fury shall be quenched: here, usher!

[*Drinks.*

USH. I pledge thee in good friendship.

[*Drinks.* [190

CHOUGH. I like the conclusion of roaring very well, i' faith.

TRIM. It has an excellent conclusion indeed—if the wine be good, always provided.

COL.'S FR. O, the wine must be always provided, be sure of that.

USH. Else you spoil the conclusion, and that, you know, crowns all. [199

CHOUGH. 'Tis much like wrestling, i' faith, for we shake hands ere we begin; now, that's to avoid the law, for then, if he throw him a furlong into the ground, he cannot recover himself upon him, because 'twas done in cold friendship.

COL.'S FR. I believe you, sir.

CHOUGH. And then we drink afterwards, just in this fashion: wrestling and roaring are as like as can be, i'faith, even like long sword and half pike. [210

COL.'S FR. Nay, they are reciprocal, if you mark it, for, as there is a great roaring at wrestling, so there is a kind of wrestling and contention at roaring.

CHOUGH. True, i'faith, for I have heard 'em roar from the six windmills to Islington: those have been great falls then.

COL.'S FR. Come, now, a brief rehearsal of your other day's lesson, betwixt [220 your man and you, and then for to-day we break up school.

CHOUGH. Come, Trimtram.—If I be out, tutor, I'll be bold to look in my tables, because I doubt I am scarce perfect.

[2] harlot. [3] slander.
[4] Draw thy sword.—*Dyce.*

Col's Fr. Well, well, I will not see small faults.

Chough. The wall! [229

Trim. The wall of me? to thy kennel, spaniel!

Chough. Wilt thou not yield precedency?

Trim. To thee? I know thee and thy brood.

Chough. Knowest thou my brood? I know thy brood too, thou art a rook.

Trim. The nearer akin to the choughs.

Chough. The rooks akin to the choughs? [240

Col.'s Fr. Very well maintained!

Chough. Dungcoer, thou liest!

Trim. Lie? enucleate the kernel of thy scabbard.

Chough. Now, if I durst draw my sword, 'twere valiant, i'faith.

Col.'s Fr. Draw, draw, howsoever!

Chough. Have some wine ready to make us friends, I pray you. [249

Trim. Chough, I will make thee fly and roar.

Chough. I will roar if thou strikest me.

Col.'s Fr. So, 'tis enough; now conclude in wine: I see you will prove an excellent practitioner: wondrous well performed on both sides!

Chough. Here, Trimtram, I drink to thee. [*Drinks.*

Trim. I'll pledge you in good friendship. [*Drinks.* [260

Enter Servant.

Serv. Is there not one Master Chough here?

Ush. This is the gentleman, sir.

Serv. My master, sir, your elected father-in-law, desires speedily to speak with you.

Chough. Friend, I will follow thee: I would thou hadst come a little sooner! thou shouldst have seen roaring sport, i'faith. [271

Serv. Sir, I'll return that you are following.

Chough. Do so. [*Exit* Servant.]—I'll tell thee, tutor, I am to marry shortly; but I will defer it a while till I can roar perfectly, that I may get the upper hand of my wife on the wedding-day; 't must be done at first or never.

Col.'s Fr. 'Twill serve you to good use in that, sir. [281

Chough. How likest thou this, whiffler?[5]

Vap. Very valiantly, i'faith, sir.

Chough. Tush, thou shalt see more by and by.

Vap. I can stay no longer indeed, sir: who pays me for my tobacco?

Chough. How? pay for tobacco? away, ye sooty-mouthed piper! you rusty piece of Martlemas bacon, away! [291

Trim. Let me give him a mark[6] for't.

Chough. No, Trimtram, do not strike him; we'll only roar out a curse upon him.

Trim. Well, do you begin then.

Chough. May thy roll rot, and thy pudding[7] drop in pieces, being sophisticated with filthy urine! [299

Trim. May sergeants dwell on either side of thee, to fright away the twopenny customers!

Chough. And, for thy penny ones, let them suck thee dry!

Trim. When thou art dead, mayst thou have no other sheets to be buried in but mouldy tobacco-leaves!

Chough. And no strawings to stick thy carcase but the bitter stalks! [309

Trim. Thy mourners all greasy tapsters!

Chough. With foul tobacco-pipes in their hats, instead of rotten rosemary; and, last of all, may my man and I live to see all this performed and to piss reeking even upon thy grave!

Trim. And, last of all for me, let this epitaph be remembered over thee:

Here coldly now within is laid to rot
A man that yesterday was piping hot: [320
Some say he died by pudding, some by prick,
Others by roll and ball, some leaf; all stick

[5] tobacco-smoker.
[6] A coin worth about $3.25.
[7] roll and pudding were forms of tobacco.

Fast in censure, yet think it strange and rare
He lived by smoke, yet died for want of air;
But then the surgeon said, when he beheld him,
It was the burning of his pipe that killed him.

CHOUGH. So, are you paid now, whiffler?

VAP. All this is but smoke out of a stinking pipe.

CHOUGH. So, so, pay him now, usher. [VAPOR *is paid by the* USHER, *and exit.*

COL.'S FR. Do not henceforth neglect your schooling, Master Chough.

CHOUGH. Call me rook, if I do, tutor.

TRIM. And me raven, though my name be Trimtram.

CHOUGH. Farewell, tutor!

TRIM. Farewell, usher! [*Exeunt* CHOUGH *and* TRIMTRAM.

COL.'S FR. Thus, when the drum's unbraced and trumpets cease,
Soldiers must get pay for to live in peace.

SCENE II (M)

The COLONEL *is lying on a couch in his house with several of his* FRIENDS *watching him. The* SURGEON *is just leaving him as the* COLONEL'S SISTER *enters by another door.*

COL.'S SIST. O my most worthy brother, thy hard fate 'twas!—
<Come hither, honest surgeon, and deal faithfully
With a distressëd virgin: what hope is there?

SURG. Hope? chilis[8] was 'scaped miraculously, lady.

COL.'S SIST. What's that, sir?

SURG. Cava vena: I care but little for his wound i' the œsophag, [*snapping his fingers*] not thus much, trust me; but when they come to diaphragma once, the small intestines, or the spinal medul, or i' th' roots of the emunctories of the noble parts, then straight I fear a syncope, the flanks retiring towards the back, the urine bloody, the excrements purulent, and the dolor pricking or pungent.

COL.'S SIST. Alas, I'm ne'er the better for this answer!

SURG. Now I must tell you his principal dolor lies i' th' region of the liver, and there's both inflammation and tumefaction feared; marry, I made him a quadrangular plumation, where I used sanguis draconis, by my faith, with powders incarnative, which I tempered with oil of hypericon and other liquors mundificative.

COL.'S SIST. Pox a' your mundies figatives! I would they were all fired!

SURG. But I purpose, lady, to make another experiment at next dressing with a sarcotic medicament made of iris of Florence; thus, mastic, calaphena, opoponax, sacrocolla—

COL.'S SIST. Sacro-halter! what comfort is i' this to a poor gentlewoman? pray, tell me in plain terms what you think of him.

SURG. Marry, in plain terms I know not what to say to him: the wound, I can assure you, inclines to paralism, and I find his body cacochymic: being then in fear of fever and inflammation, I nourish him altogether with viands refrigerative, and give for potion the juice of savicola dissolved with water cerefolium: I could do no more, lady, if his best ginglymus[9] were dissevered.> [*Exit.*

COL.'S SIST. <What thankless pains does the tongue often take
To make the whole man most ridiculous!
I come to him for comfort, and he tires me
Worse than my sorrow: what a precious good
May be delivered sweetly in few words!
And what a mount of nothing has he cast forth!
Alas, his strength decays!>—How cheer you, sir,
My honored brother?

COL. In soul never better;
I feel an excellent health there, such a stoutness,

[8] *vena cava*, the largest vein in the body.

[9] joint.

My invisible enemies fly me: seeing me armed
With penitence and forgiveness, they fall backward,
Whether through admiration, not imagining [80
There were such armory in a soldier's soul
As pardon and repentance, or through power
Of ghostly valor; but I have been lord
Of a more happy conquest in nine hours now
Than in nine years before.—O kind lieutenants, [89
This is the only war we should provide for!
Where he that forgives largest and sighs strongest
Is a tried soldier, a true man indeed,
And wins the best field, makes his own heart bleed.
Read the last part of that will, sir.

1 Fr. of Col. "I also require at the hands of my most beloved sister, whom I make full executrix, the disposure of [100 my body in burial at Saint Martin's i' th' Field; and to cause to be distributed to the poor of the same parish forty mark, and to the hospital of maimed soldiers a hundred: lastly, I give and bequeath to my kind, dear, and virtuous sister the full possession of my present estate in riches, whether it be in lands, leases, money, goods, plate, jewels, or what kind soever, upon this condition [110 following, that she forthwith tender both herself and all these infeoffments to that noble captain, my late enemy, Captain Ager."

Col.'s Sist. How, sir?

Col. Read it again, sir; let her hear it plain.

Col.'s Sist. Pray, spare your pains, sir; 'tis too plain already.— [119
Good sir, how do you? is your memory perfect?
This will makes question of you: I bestowed
So much grief and compassion a' your wound,
I never looked into your senses' epilepsy:
The sickness and infirmity of your judgment
Is to be doubted now more than your body's. [130
Why, is your love no dearer to me, sir,
Than to dispose me so upon the man
Whose fury is your body's present torment,
The author of your danger, one I hate
Beyond the bounds of malice? Do you not feel
His wrath upon you? I beseech you, sir,
Alter that cruel article!

Col. Cruel, sister?— [140
Forgive me, natural love, I must offend thee,
Speaking to this woman.—Am I content,
Having much kindred, yet to give thee all,
Because in thee I'd raise my means to goodness,
And canst thou prove so thankless to my bounty, [149
To grudge my soul her peace? is my intent
To leave her rich, whose only desire is
To send me poorer into the next world
Than ever usurer went, or politic statist?
Is it so burdensome for thee to love
Where I forgive? O, wretched is the man
That builds the last hopes of his saving comforts [159
Upon a woman's charity! he's most miserable:
If it were possible, her obstinate will
Will pull him down in his midway to Heaven.
I've wronged that worthy man past recompense,
And in my anger robbed him of fair fame;
And thou the fairest restitution art [169
My life could yield him: if I knew a fairer,
I'd set thee by and thy unwilling goodness,
And never make my sacred peace of thee:
But there's the cruelty of a fate debarred:

Thou art the last, and all, and thou art hard!
COL.'s SIST. Let your grieved heart hold better thoughts of me;
I will not prove so, sir; but, since you enforce it
With such a strength of passion, I'll perform
What by your will you have enjoined me to,
Though the world never show me joy again.
COL. O, this may be fair cunning for the time,
To put me off, knowing I hold not long;
And, when I look to have my joys accomplished,
I shall find no such things: that were vile cozenage,
And not to be repented.
COL.'s SIST. By all the blessedness
Truth and a good life looks for, I will do't, sir!
COL. Comforts reward you for't whene'er you grieve!
I know if you dare swear, I may believe.

SCENE III (M)

CAPTAIN AGER *has returned home from his duel.*

CAP. AGER. No sooner have I entrance i' this house now
But all my joy falls from me, which was wont
To be the sanctuary of my comforts:
Methought I loved it with a reverent gladness,
As holy men do consecrated temples
For the saint's sake, which I believed my mother;
But proved a false faith since, a fearful heresy.
O, who'd erect the assurance of his joys
Upon a woman's goodness, whose best virtue
Is to commit unseen, and highest secrecy
To hide but her own sin! there's their perfection.
And, if she be so good, which many fail of too,
When these are bad, how wondrous ill are they!
What comfort is't to fight, win this day's fame,
When all my after-days are lamps of shame?

Enter LADY AGER.

LADY AGER. <Blessings be firm to me! he's come, 'tis he!>
[*Calling.*] A surgeon speedily!
CAP. AGER. A surgeon? why, madam?
LADY AGER. Perhaps you'll say 'tis but a little wound;
Good to prevent a danger.—[*Calling.*] Quick, a surgeon!
CAP. AGER. Why, madam!
LADY AGER. Ay, ay, that's all the fault of valiant men,
They'll not be known a' their hurts till they're past help,
And then too late they wish for't.
CAP. AGER. Will you hear me?
LADY AGER. 'Tis no disparagement to confess a wound;
I'm glad, sir, 'tis no worse.—[*Calling.*] A surgeon quickly!
CAP. AGER. Madam—
LADY AGER. Come, come, sir, a wound's honorable,
And never shames the wearer.
CAP. AGER. By the justice
I owe to honor, I came off untouched!
LADY AGER. I'd rather believe that.
CAP AGER. You believe truth so.
LADY AGER. My tears prevail then. Welcome, welcome, sir,
As peace and mercy to one new departed!
Why would you go though, and deceive me so,
When my abundant love took all the course
That might be to prevent it? I did that
For my affection's sake—goodness forgive me for't!—
That, were my own life's safety put upon't,
I'd rather die than do't. Think how you used me then;

And yet would you go and hazard yourself too!
'Twas but unkindly done.
CAP. AGER. What's all this, madam?
LADY AGER. See, then, how rash you were and short in wisdom!
Why, wrong my faith I did, slandered my constancy,
Belied my truth; that which few mothers will,
Or fewer can, I did, out of true fear
And loving care, only to keep thee here.
CAP. AGER. I doubt I'm too quick of apprehension now,
And that's a general fault when we hear joyfully,
With the desire of longing for't: I ask it,
Why, were you never false?
LADY AGER. May death come to me
Before repentance then!
CAP. AGER. I heard it plain sure—
Not false at all?
LADY AGER. By the reward of truth,
I never knew that deed that claims the name on't!
CAP. AGER. May, then, that glorious reward you swore by
Be never-failing to you! all the blessings
That you have given me, since obedient custom
Taught me to kneel and ask 'em, are not valuable
With this immaculate blessing of your truth:
This is the palm to victory,
The crown for all deserts past and to come:
Let 'em be numberless; they are rewarded;
Already they're rewarded. Bless this frame,
I feel it much too weak to bear the joy on't. [*Kneels.*
LADY AGER. Rise, sir.
CAP. AGER. O, pardon me!
I cannot honor you too much, too long.
I kneel not only to a mother now,
But to a woman that was never false:
Ye're dear, and ye're good too; I think a' that:
What reverence does she merit! 'tis fit such
Should be distinguished from the prostrate sex;
And what distinction properer can be shown,
Than honor done to her that keeps her own?
LADY AGER. Come, sir, I'll have you rise.
CAP. AGER. To do a deed, then, [*Rises.*
That shall for ever raise me. O my glory!
Why, this, this is the quarrel that I looked for!
The t'other but a shift to hold time play.
You sacred ministers of preservation,
For Heaven's sake send him life,
And with it mighty health, and such a strength
May equal but the cause! I wish no foul things:
If life but glow in him, he shall know instantly
That I'm resolved to call him to account for't.
LADY AGER. Why, hark you, sir—
CAP. AGER. I bind you by your honor, madam,
You speak no hindrance to's; take heed, you ought not.
LADY AGER. What an unhappiness have I in goodness!
'Tis ever my desire to intend well,
But have no fortunate way in't. For all this
Deserve I yet no better of you
But to be grieved again? Are you not well
With honest gain of fame, with safety purchased?
Will you needs tempt a ruin that avoids you? [*Exit.*
CAP. AGER. No, you've prevailed; things of this nature sprung,
When they use action must use little tongue.—

Enter SERVANT.

Now, sir, the news?
SER. Sir, there's a gentlewoman

Desires some conference with you.
CAP. AGER. How, with me?
A gentlewoman? what is she?
SER. Her attendant
Delivered her to be the colonel's sister. [179
CAP. AGER. O, for a storm then! [*Exit* SERVANT.] 'Las, poor, virtuous gentlewoman,
I will endure her violence with much pity!
She comes to ease her heart, good, noble soul;
'Tis e'en a charity to release the burden;
Were not that remedy ordained for women, [189
Their hearts would never hold three years together:

Enter the COLONEL'S SISTER.

<And here she comes; I never marked so much of her;
That face can be the mistress of no anger.
But I might very well endure a month, methinks.>
I am the man; speak, lady; I'll stand fair. [200
COL'S SIST. And I'm enjoined by vow to fall thus low, [*Kneels.*
And, from the dying hand of a repentant,
Offer, for expiation of wrongs done you,
Myself, and with myself all that was his,
Which upon that condition was made mine,
Being his soul's wish to depart absolute man,
In life a soldier, death a Christiän. [210
CAP. AGER. O, Heaven has touched him nobly! how it shames
My virtue's slow perfection! Rise, dear brightness—
I forget manners too—up, matchless sweetness!
COL'S SIST. I must not, sir; there is not in my vow
That liberty; I must be received first,
Or all denied; if either, I am free. [220
CAP. AGER. He must be without soul should deny thee;
And with that reverence I receive the gift
As it was sent me. [*Raises her.*] Worthy colönel!
Has such a conquering way i' the blest things,
Whoever overcomes, he only wins.
[*Exeunt.* [230

SCENE IV (R)

CAPTAIN ALBO, MEG, *and* PRISS *are in a London street. A noise is heard of the "hem" with which prostitutes and bawds were greeted.*

MEG. Hark of these hard-hearted bloodhounds! these butchers are e'en as merciless as their dogs; they knock down a woman's fame e'en as it walks the streets by 'em. [9
PRISS. And the captain here, that should defend us, walks by like John of the apple-loft.
CAP. ALBO. What, for interjections, Priss, "hem evax, vah"? let the carnifexes scour their throats! thou knowest there is a curse hangs over their bloody heads; this year there shall be more butchers' pricks burnt than of all trades besides.
MEG. I do wonder how thou camest to be a captain. [20
CAP. ALBO. As thou camest to be a bawd, Meg, and Priss to be a whore; every one by their deserts.
MEG. "Bawd" and "whore"? out, you unprofitable rascal! hast not thou been at the new play yet, to teach thee better manners? truly they say they are the finest players, and good speakers of gentlewomen of our quality; "bawd" and "whore" is not mentioned amongst [30 'em; but the handsomest narrow-mouthed names they have for us, that some of them may serve as well for a lady as for one of our occupation.
PRISS. Prithee, patroness, let's go see a piece of that play; if we shall have good words for our money, 'tis as much as we can deserve, i'faith.
MEG. I doubt 'tis too late now; but another time, servant. [40
CAP. ALBO. Let's go now, sweet face; I am acquainted with one of the pantomimics; the bulchins[10] will use the

[10] bulkins, bull-calves.

Irish captain with respect, and you two shall be boxed amongst the better sort.

Priss. Sirrah Captain Albo, I doubt you are but white-livered; look that you defend us valiantly; you know your penance else.—Patroness, you remember how you used him once? [50

Meg. Ay, servant, and I shall never forget it till I use him so again.—Do you remember, captain?

Cap. Albo. Mum, Meg; I will not hear on't now.

Meg. How I and my amazons stripped you as naked as an Indian—

Cap. Albo. Why, Meg—

Meg. And then how I bound you to the good behavior in the open fields— [60

Priss. And then you strowed oats upon his hoppers—

Cap. Albo. Prithee, sweet face—

Priss. And then brought your ducks to nibble upon him.—You remember?

Cap. Albo. O, the remembrance tortures me again! no more, good sweet face.

Meg. Well, lead on, sir; but hark a little. [69

Enter Chough *and* Trimtram.

Chough. Didst thou bargain for the bladders with the butcher, Trim?

Trim. Ay, sir, I have 'em here; I'll practise to swim too, sir, and then I may roar with the water at London Bridge: he that roars by land and by water both is the perfect roarer.

Chough. Well, I'll venture to swim too: if my father-in-law gives me a good dowry with his daughter, I shall hold up my head well enough. [81

Trim. Peace, sir; here's practice for our roaring; here's a centaur and two hippocrenes.

Chough. Offer the jostle, Trim. [Trimtram *jostles* Captain Albo.

Cap. Albo. Ha! what meanest thou by that?

Trim. I mean to confront thee, cyclops. [90

Chough. I'll tell thee what 'a means—is this thy sister?

Cap. Albo. How then, sir?

Chough. Why, then, I say she is a bronstrops; and this is a fucus.

Priss. No, indeed, sir; we are both fucusses.

Cap. Albo. Art thou military? art thou a soldier? [99

Chough. A soldier? no, I scorn to be so poor; I am a roarer.

Cap. Albo. A roarer?

Trim. Ay, sir, two roarers.

Cap. Albo. Know, then, my fresh-water friends, that I am a captain.

Chough. What, and have but two to serve under you?

Cap. Albo. I am now retiring the field.

Trim. You may see that by his bag and baggage. [110

Chough. Deliver up thy panagron to me.

Trim. And give me thy sindicus.

Cap. Albo. Deliver?

Meg. I pray you, captain, be contented; the gentlemen seem to give us very good words.

Chough. "Good words"? ay, if you could understand 'em; the words cost twenty pound. [120

Meg. What is your pleasure, gentlemen?

Chough. I would enucleate my fructifer.

Priss. What says he, patroness?

Meg. He would enoculate: I understand the gentleman very pithily.

Cap. Albo. Speak, are you gentle or plebeian? can you give arms? [129

Chough. Arms? ay, sir; you shall feel our arms presently.

Trim. <'Sault you the women; I'll pepper him till he stinks again: I perceive what countryman he is; let me alone with him.>

Cap. Albo. Darest thou charge a captain? [137

Trim. Yes, and discharge upon him too.

Cap. Albo. Foh, 'tis poison to my country, the slave has eaten pippins! O, shoot no more! turn both thy broadsides rather than thy poop; 'tis foul play; my country breeds no poison. I yield; the great O'Toole shall yield on these conditions.

Chough. I have given one of 'em a fair fall, Trim.

Trim. Then thus far we bring home conquest.—

Follow me, captain; the cyclops doth command.

Chough. Follow me, tweaks,[11] the centaur doth command.

Meg. Anything, sweet gentlemen: wilt please you to lead to the tavern, where we'll make all friends?

Trim. Why, now you come to the conclusion.

Chough. Stay, Trim; I have heard your tweaks are like your mermaids, they have sweet voices to entice the passengers: let's have a song; and then we'll set 'em at liberty.

Trim. In the commendation of roaring, not else, sir.

Chough. Ay, in the commendation of roaring.

Meg. The best we can, gentlemen.

[*Sings,* Priss *joining in chorus.*

Then here thou shalt resign
Both captain and commander;
That name was never thine,
But apple-squire and pander;
And henceforth will we grant,
In pillage or in monies,
In clothing or provant,
Whate'er we get by conies:
With a hone, a hone, a hone,
No cheaters nor decoys
Shall have a share, but alone
The bravest roaring boys.

Whate'er we get, by gulls
Of country or of city,
Old flat-caps or young heirs,
Or lawyers' clerks so witty;
By sailors newly landed,
To put in for fresh waters;
By wandering gander-mooners,
Or muffled late night-walkers.
With a hone, &c.

Whate'er we get by strangers,
The Scotch, the Dutch, or Irish,
Or, to come nearer home,
By masters of the parish;
It is concluded thus,
By all and every wench,
To take of all their coins,
And pay 'em back in French.
With a hone, &c.

Chough. Melodious minotaur!

Trim. Harmonious hippocrene!

Chough. Sweet-breasted bronstrops!

Trim. Most tunable tweak!

Chough. Delicious duplar!

Trim. Putrefactious panagron!

Chough. Calumnious callicut!

Trim. And most singular sindicus!

Meg. We shall never be able to deserve these good words at your hands, gentlemen.

Cap. Albo. Shake golls with the captain; he shall be thy valiant friend.

Chough. Not yet, captain; we must make an end of our roaring first.

Trim. We'll serve 'em as we did the tobacco-man, lay a curse upon 'em; marry, we'll lay it on gently, because they have used us so kindly; and then we'll shake golls together.

Priss. As gently as you can, sweet gentlemen.

Chough. For thee, O pandar, mayst thou trudge till the damned soles of thy boots fleet into dirt, but never rise into air!

Trim. Next, mayst thou fleet so long from place to place, till thou be'st kicked out of Fleet Street!

Chough. As thou hast lived by bad flesh, so rotten mutton be thy bane!

Trim. When thou art dead, may twenty whores follow thee, that thou mayst go a squire[12] to thy grave!

Cap. Albo. Enough for me, sweet faces; let me sleep in my grave.

Chough. For thee, old sindicus, may I see thee ride in a caroch with two wheels, and drawn with one horse.[13]

Trim. Ten beadles running by, instead of footmen!

Chough. With every one a whip, 'stead of an Irish dart![14]

Trim. Forty barbers' basins sounding before, instead of trumpets!

[11] prostitutes.

[12] Pimp.

[13] May I see you be carted as a bawd.

[14] The dart carried by every Irish running-footman.

Meg. This will be comely indeed, sweet gentlemen roarers.

Trim. Thy ruff starched yellow with rotten eggs!

Chough. And mayst thou then be drawn from Holborn to Hounslow Heath!

Trim. And then be burnt to Cole- [250
brook, for destroying of Maidenhead!

Meg. I will study to deserve this kindness at your hands, gentlemen.

Chough. Now, for thee, little fucus; mayst thou first serve out thy time as a tweak, and then become a bronstrops, as she is!

Trim. Mayst thou have a reasonable good spring, for thou art likely to have many dangerous foul falls! [260

Chough. Mayst thou have two ruffs torn in one week!

Trim. May spiders only weave thy cobweb-lawn!

Chough. Mayst thou set up in Rogue-lane—

Trim. Live till thou stinkest in Garden-alleys—

Chough. And die sweetly in Tower-ditch! [270

Priss. I thank you for that, good sir roarer.

Chough. Come, shall we go now, Trim? my father-in-law stays for me all this while.

Trim. Nay, I'll serve 'em as we did the tobacco-man; I'll bury 'em altogether, and give 'em an epitaph.

Chough. All together, Trim? why, then, the epitaph will be accessary to the sin. [281

Trim. Alas, he has kept the door all his life-time! for pity, let 'em lie together in their graves.

Cap. Albo. E'en as thou wilt, Trim, and I thank you too, sir.

Trim.

He that the reason would know, let him hark,
Why these three were buried near Marybone Park: [291
These three were a pander, a bawd, and a whore,
That sucked many dry to the bones before.
Will you know how they lived? here't may be read:
The Low Countries did ever find 'em bread;
They lived by Flushing, by Sluys, and the Groyne, [300
Sickened in France, and died under the Line.
Three letters at last commended 'em hither,
But the hangman broke one in putting together:
P was the first, who cries out for a pardon,
O craves his book, yet could not read such a hard one, [309
An X was the last, which in conjunction
Was broke by Brandon;[15] and here's the conclusion:
By three trees, three letters, these three, pander, bawd, whore,
Now stink below ground, stunk long above before.

Chough. So, now we have done with you; remember roaring boys.

Trim. Farewell, centaur!

Chough. Farewell, bronstrops! [320

Trim. Farewell, fucus! [*Exeunt* Chough *and* Trimtram.

Cap. Albo. Well, Meg, I will learn to roar, and still maintain the name of captain over these lance-presadoes.

Meg. If thou dost not, mayst thou be buried under the roaring curse! [*Exeunt.*

ACT FIVE

Scene I (R, M) [1]

Jane, *dressed as a bride, is in a room in her father's house. The* Physician *has been again attempting to win her for himself.*

Phy. Will you be obstinate?

Jane. Torment me not,
Thou lingering executioner to death,
Greatest disease to nature, that striv'st by art [9
To make men long a-dying! your practice is
Upon men's bodies; as men pull roses

[15] Gregory Brandon, the common hangman.

[1] The scene is entirely Rowley's, save that the conclusion of it, from Russell's "See, my best guests are coming," is Middleton's.

For their own relish, but to kill the flower,
So you maintain your lives by others' deaths:
What eat you then but carrion?
PHY. Fie, bitterness!
Ye'd need to candy o'er your tongue a little;
Your words will hardly be digested else.
JANE. You can give yourself a vomit to return 'em,
If they offend your stomach.
PHY. Hear my vow;
You are to be married to-day—
JANE. A second torment,
Worse than the first, 'cause unavoidable!
I would I could as soon annihilate
My father's will in that as forbid thy lust!
PHY. If you then tender an unwilling hand,
Meet it with revenge, marry a cuckold.
JANE. If thou wilt marry me, I'll make that vow,
And give my body for satisfactiön
To him that should enjoy me for his wife.
PHY. Go to; I'll mar your marriage.
JANE. Do; plague me so:
I'll rather bear the brand of all that's past,
In capital characters upon my brow,
Than think to be thy whore or marry him.
PHY. I will defame thee ever—
JANE. Spare me not.
PHY. I will produce thy bastard,
Bring thee to public penance—
JANE. No matter, I care not;
I shall then have a clean sheet; I'll wear twenty,
Rather than one defiled with thee.
PHY. Look for revenge!
JANE. Pursue it fully then. <Out of his hate
I shall escape, I hope, a loathëd fate.>
[*Exit*.
PHY. Am I rejected, all my baits nibbled off,
And not the fish caught? I'll trouble the whole stream,
And choke it in the mud: since hooks not take,
I'll throw in nets that shall or kill or break.

Enter TRIMTRAM *with rosemary*.

This is the bridegroom's man.—Hark, sir, a word.
TRIM. 'Tis a busy day, sir, nor I need no physic;
You see I scour about my business.
PHY. Pray you, a word, sir: your master is to be married to-day?
TRIM. Else all this rosemary's lost.
PHY. I would speak with your master, sir.
TRIM. My master, sir, is to be married this morning, and cannot be within while[2] soon at night.
PHY. If you will do your master the best service
That e'er you did him; if he shall not curse
Your negligence hereafter, slacking it;
If he shall bless me for the dearest friend
That ever his acquaintance met withal:
Let me speak with him ere he go to church.
TRIM. A right physician! you would have none go to the church nor churchyard till you send them thither: well, if Death do not spare you yourselves, he deals hardly with you, for you are better benefactors and send more to him than all diseases besides.
CHOUGH, *within*. What, Trimtram, Trimtram!
TRIM. I come, sir.—Hark you, you may hear him! he's upon the spur, and would fain mount the saddle of matrimony; but, if I can, I'll persuade him to come to you.
PHY. Pray you, do, sir. [*Exit* TRIMTRAM.]—I'll teach all peevish niceness
To beware the strong advantage of revenge.

Enter CHOUGH.

CHOUGH. Who's that would speak with me?

[2] until.

PHY. None but a friend, sir; I would speak with you.

CHOUGH. Why, sir, and I dare speak with any man under the universe. Can you roar, sir?

PHY. No, in faith, sir; [119
I come to tell you mildly for your good,
If you please to hear me: you are upon marriage?

CHOUGH. No, sir; I am towards it, but not upon it yet.

PHY. Do you know what you do?

CHOUGH. Yes, sir, I have practised what to do before now; I would be ashamed to be married else: I have seen a bronstrops in my time, and a hippocrene, and a tweak too. [130

PHY. Take fair heed, sir; the wife that you would marry
Is not fit for you.

CHOUGH. Why, sir, have you tried her?

PHY. Not I, believe it, sir; but believe withal
She has been tried.

CHOUGH. Why, sir, is she a fructifer or a fucus? [140

PHY. All that I speak, sir, is in love to you:
Your bride, that may be, has not that portion
That a bride should have.

CHOUGH. Why, sir, she has a thousand and a better penny.

PHY. I do not speak of rubbish, dross, and ore,
But the refinëd metal, honor, sir. [150

CHOUGH. What she wants in honor shall be made up in worship, sir; money will purchase both.

PHY. To be plain with you, she's naught.

CHOUGH, *drawing his sword*. If thou canst not roar, thou'rt a dead man! my bride naught?

PHY., *drawing his sword*. Sir, I do not fear you that way; what I speak
My life shall maintain; I say she is [161 naught.

CHOUGH. Dost thou not fear me?

PHY. Indeed I do not, sir.

CHOUGH. I'll never draw upon thee while I live, for that trick; put up and speak freely.

PHY. Your intended bride is a whore; that's freely, sir. [169

CHOUGH. Yes, faith, a whore's free enough, an she hath a conscience. Is she a whore? foot, I warrant she has the pox then.

PHY. Worse, the plague; 'tis more incurable.

CHOUGH. A plaguy whore? a pox on her, I'll none of her!

PHY. Mine accusation shall have firm evidence;
I will produce an unavoided[3] witness,
A bastard of her bearing. [181

CHOUGH. A bastard? 'snails, there's great suspicion she's a whore then! I'll wrestle a fall with her father for putting this trick upon me, as I am a gentleman.

PHY. Good sir, mistake me not; I do not speak [188
To break the contract of united hearts;
I will not pull that curse upon my head,
To separate the husband and the wife;
But this, in love, I thought fit to reveal,
As the due office betwixt man and man,
That you might not be ignorant of your ills.
Consider now of my premonishment
As yourself shall please.

CHOUGH. I'll burn all the rosemary to sweeten the house, for, in my conscience, 'tis infected: has she drunk bas- [200 tard? if she would piss me wine-vinegar now nine times a day, I'd never have her; and I thank you too.

Re-enter TRIMTRAM.

TRIM. Come, will you come away, sir? they have all rosemary, and stay for you to lead the way.

CHOUGH. I'll not be married to-day, Trimtram: hast e'er an almanac about thee? this is the nineteenth of August; look what day of the month 'tis. [211

TRIM. 'Tis tenty-nine indeed, sir.

[*Looks in an almanac.*

[3] irrefutable.

CHOUGH. What's the word? what says Bretnor?

TRIM. The word is, sir, "There's a hole in her coat."

CHOUGH. I thought so; the physician agrees with him; I'll not marry to-day.

TRIM. I pray you, sir; there will [220 be charges for new rosemary else; this will be withered by to-morrow.

CHOUGH. Make a bonfire on't, to sweeten Rosemary-lane: prithee, Trim, entreat my father-in-law that might have been, to come and speak with me.

TRIM. The bride cries already and looks t'other way; an you be so backward too, we shall have a fine arseward wedding on't. [*Exit.* [230

CHOUGH. You'll stand to your words, sir?

PHY. I'll not fly the house, sir;
When you have need, call me to evidence.

CHOUGH. If you'll prove she has borne a bastard, I'll stand to't she's a whore.

[*Exit* PHYSICIAN.

Enter RUSSELL *and* TRIMTRAM.

RUS. Why, how now, son? what causeth these delays? [241
All stay for your leading.

CHOUGH. Came I from the Mount to be confronted?

RUS. How's that, sir?

CHOUGH. Canst thou roar, old man?

RUS. Roar? how mean you, sir?

CHOUGH. Why, then, I'll tell thee plainly, thy daughter is a bronstrops.

RUS. A bronstrops? what's that, sir?

TRIM. Sir, if she be so, she is a hippocrene. [252

CHOUGH. Nay, worse, she is a fructifer.

TRIM. Nay, then, she is a fucus, a minotaur, and a tweak.

RUS. Pray you, speak to my understanding, sir.

CHOUGH. If thou wilt have it in plain terms, she is a callicut and a panagron.

TRIM. Nay, then, she is a duplar and a sindicus. [261

RUS. Good, sir, speak English to me.

CHOUGH. All this is Cornish to thee; I say thy daughter has drunk bastard in her time.

RUS. Bastard? you do not mean to make her a whore?

CHOUGH. Yes, but I do, if she make a fool of me; I'll ne'er make her my wife till she have her maidenhead again. [270

RUS. A whore? I do defy this calumny.

CHOUGH. Dost thou? I defy thee then.

TRIM. Do you, sir?—Then I defy thee too: fight with us both at once in this quarrel, if thou darest!

CHOUGH. I could have had a whore at Plymouth.

TRIM. Ay, or at Pe'ryn.

CHOUGH. Ay, or under the Mount.

TRIM. Or as you came at Ivel.[4] [280

CHOUGH. Or at Wookey-Hole in Somersetshire.

TRIM. Or at the Hanging-stones in Wiltshire.

CHOUGH. Or at Maidenhead in Berkshire: and did I come in by Maidenhead to go out by Staines? O, that man, woman, or child would wrestle with me for a pound of patience! [289

RUS. Some thief has put in poison at your ears,
To steal the good name of my child from me;
Or, if it be a malice of your own,
Be sure I will enforce a proof from you.

CHOUGH. He's a goose and a woodcock that says I will not prove any word that I speak.

TRIM. Ay, either goose or woodcock; he shall, sir, with any man. [300

CHOUGH, *calling*. Phy-si-ci-an! mauz avez[5] physician!

RUS. Is he the author?

Re-enter PHYSICIAN.

PHY. Sir, with much sorrow for your sorrow's sake,
I must deliver this most certain truth;
Your daughter is an honor-stainëd bride;
Indeed, she is the mother to a child [309
Before the lawful wife unto a husband.

CHOUGH. La, that's worse than I told thee; I said she had borne a bastard,

[4] Yeovil.
[5] This awaits explanation.

and he says she was the mother on't too.

Rus. I'm yet an infidel against all this,
And will believe the sun is made of brass,
The stars of amber—

Chough. And the moon of a Holland cheese. [319

Rus. Rather than this impossibility.
O, here she comes.

Re-enter Jane, *with* Anne.

Nay, come, daughter, stand at the bar of shame;
Either now quit thyself, or kill me ever:
Your marriage-day is spoiled, if all be true.

Jane. A happy misery! who's my accuser? [329

Phy. I am, that knows it true I speak.

Chough. Yes, and I'm his witness.

Trim. And I.

Chough. And I again.

Trim. And I again too; there's four, that's enough, I hope.

Rus. How can you witness, sir, that nothing know
But what you have received from his report? [339

Chough. Must we not believe our physicians? pray you, think I know as much as every fool does.

Trim. Let me be Trimtram, I pray you too, sir.

Jane. Sir, if this bad man have laid a blemish
On my white name, he is a most false one,
Defaming me for the just denial [349
Of his foul lust.—Nay, now you shall be known, sir.

Anne. Sir, I'm his sister, and do better know him
Than all of you: give not too much belief
To his wild words; he's oftentimes mad, sir.

Phy. I thank you, good sister!

Anne. Are you not mad [359
To do this office? fie upon your malice!

Phy. I'll presently produce both nurse and child,
Whose very eyes shall call her mother before it speaks. [*Exit.*

Chough. Ha, ha, ha, ha! by my troth, I'd spend a shilling on that condition to hear that: I think in my conscience I shall take the physician in a lie; if the child call her mother before it can speak, I'll never wrestle while I live again. [370

Trim. It must be a she child, if it do, sir; and those speak the soonest of any living creatures, they say.

Chough. Baw, waw! a dog will bark a month sooner; he's a very puppy else.

Rus. <Come, tell truth 'twixt ourselves; here's none but friends:
One spot a father's love will soon wipe off; [379
The truth, and thereby try my love abundant;
I'll cover it with all the care I have,
And yet, perhaps, make up a marriage-day.

Jane. Then it's true, sir, I have a child.

Rus. Hast thou?
Well, wipe thine eyes; I'm a grandfather then.
If all bastards were banished, the city would be thin [390
In the thickest term-time. Well, now let me alone,
I'll try my wits for thee.> [*Calling.*] Richard, Francis, Andrew!
None of my knaves within?

Enter Servant.

Ser. Here's one of 'em, sir: the guests come in apace.

Rus. Do they, Dick? let 'em have wine and sugar; we'll be for 'em presently; [400 but hark, Dick. [*Whispers to* Servant.

Chough. I long to hear this child speak, i'faith, Trim; I would this foolish physician would come once.

Trim. If it calls her mother, I hope it shall never call you father.

Chough. No; an it do, I'll whip it, i'faith, and give thee leave to whip me.

Rus. Run on thy best legs, Dick. [410

Ser. I'll be here in a twinkling, sir. [*Exit.*

Re-enter PHYSICIAN *with* DUTCH NURSE *and Child.*

PHY. Now, gentlemen, believe your eyes, if not
My tongue.—Do not you call this your child?

CHOUGH. Phew, that's not the point! you promised us the child should call [420 her mother; if it does this month, I'll ne'er go to the roaring school again.

RUS. Whose child is this, nurse?

NURSE. Dis gentleman's, so he to me readen. [*Points to the* PHYSICIAN.

CHOUGH. <'Snails, she's the physician's bronstrops, Trim!

TRIM. His fucus, his very tweak, i'faith. [429

CHOUGH. A glister in his teeth! let him take her, with a purgation to him!>

RUS. 'Tis as your sister said, you are stark mad, sir,
This much confirms it; you have defamed
Mine honest daughter; I'll have you punished for't,
Besides the civil penance of your sin,
And keeping of your bastard.

PHY. This is fine! [440
All your wit and wealth must not thus carry it.

RUS. Sir Chough, a word with you.

CHOUGH. I'll not have her, i'faith, sir; if Trimtram will have her, an he will, let him.

TRIM. Who, I, sir? I scorn it: if you'll have her, I'll have her too; I'll do as you do, and no otherwise. [450

RUS. I do not mean't to either; this only, sir,
That whatsoe'er you've seen, you would be silent;
Hinder not my child of another husband,
Though you forsake her.

CHOUGH. I'll not speak a word, i'faith.

RUS. As you are a gentleman?

CHOUGH. By these basket-hilts, as I am a youth, a gentleman, a roarer. [460

RUS. Charm your man, I beseech you, too.

CHOUGH. I warrant you, sir, he shall do nothing but what I do before him.

RUS. I shall most dearly thank you.—

Re-enter SERVANT, *with* FITZALLEN.

O, are you come?
Welcome, son-in-law! this was beyond your hope: [469
We old men have pretty conceits sometimes;
Your wedding-day's prepared; and this is it;
How think you of it?

FITZ. As of the joyfullest
That ever welcomed me! you show yourself now
A pattern to all kind fathers.—My sweetest Jane! [479

RUS. Your captivity I meant but as sauce
Unto your wedding-dinner; now I'm sure
'Tis far more welcome in this short restraint
Than had it freely come.

FITZ. A thousandfold.

JANE. <I like this well.>

CHOUGH. <I have not the heart to see this gentleman gulled so; I will reveal: I make it mine own case; 'tis a foul case. [491

TRIM. Remember you have sworn by your hilts.

CHOUGH. I'll break my hilts rather than conceal: I have a trick; do thou follow me; I will reveal it, and yet not speak it neither.

TRIM. 'Tis my duty to follow you, sir.>

[*They sing*

CHOUGH. [500
Take heed in time, O man, unto thy head!

TRIM.
All is not gold that glistereth in bed.

RUS. Why, sir! why, sir!

CHOUGH.
Look to't, I say, thy bride is a bronstrops.

TRIM.
And knows the thing that men wear in their slops.

FITZ. How's this, sir? [510

CHOUGH.
A hippocrene, a tweak, for and a fucus.
TRIM.
Let not fond love with foretops so rebuke us.

RUS. Good sir—

CHOUGH.
Behold a baby of this maid's begetting.
TRIM. [519
A deed of darkness after the sunsetting.

RUS. Your oath, sir!

CHOUGH.
I swear and sing thy bride has taken physic.
TRIM.
This was the doctor cured her of that phthisic.
CHOUGH.
If you'll believe me, I will say no more.
TRIM. [529
Thy bride's a tweak, as we do say that roar.

CHOUGH. Bear witness, gentlemen, I have not spoke a word; my hilts are whole still.

FITZ. This is a sweet epithalamium
Unto the marriage-bed, a musical,
Harmonious Iö! Sir, you have wronged me,
And basely wronged me! was this your cunning fetch, [539
To fetch me out of prison, for ever to marry me
Unto a strumpet?

RUS. None of those words, good sir;
'Tis but a fault, and 'tis a sweet one too.
Come, sir, your means is short; lengthen your fortunes
With a fair proffer: I'll put a thousand pieces
Into the scale, to help her to weigh it up,
Above the first dowry. [550

FITZ. Ha? you say well;
Shame may be bought out at a deär rate;
A thousand pieces added to her dowry!

RUS. There's five hundred of 'em to make the bargain; [*Gives money.*
I've worthy guests coming, and would not delude 'em;
Say, speak like a son to me.

FITZ. Your blessing, sir; [560
We are both yours.—Witness, gentlemen,
These must be made up a thousand pieces,
Added to a first thousand for her dowry,
To father that child.

PHY. O, is it out now?

CHOUGH. For t'other thousand, I'll do't myself yet.

TRIM. Or I, if my master will. [569

FITZ. The bargain's made, sir; I have the tender
And possession both, and will keep my purchase.

CHOUGH. Take her e'en to you with all her moveables; I'll wear my bachelor's buttons still.

TRIM. So will I, i'faith; they are the best flowers in any man's garden, next to heart's-ease. [579

FITZ. This is as welcome as the other, sir,
And both as the best bliss that e'er on earth
I shall enjoy. Sir, this is mine own child;
You could not have found out a fitter father;
Nor is it basely bred, as you imagine,
For we were wedded by the hand of Heaven
Ere this work was begun. [590

CHOUGH. At Pancridge, I'll lay my life on't.

TRIM. I'll lay my life on't too, 'twas there.

FITZ. Somewhere it was, sir.

RUS. Was't so, i'faith, son?

JANE. And that I must have revealed to you, sir,
Ere I had gone to church with this fair groom; [600
But, thank this gentleman, he prevented[6] me.—
I am much bound unto your malice, sir.

PHY. I am ashamed.

JANE. Shame to amendment then.

RUS. Now get you together for a couple of cunning ones!
But, son, a word; the latter thousand pieces
Is now more than the bargain. [610

[6] anticipated.

FITZ. No, by my faith, sir,
Here's witness enough on it; it must serve
To pay my fees, imprisonment is costly.
CHOUGH. By my troth, the old man has gulled himself finely! Well, sir, I'll bid myself a guest, though not a groom; I'll dine, and dance, and roar at the wedding for all this. [619
TRIM. So will I, sir, if my master does.
RUS. Well, sir, you're welcome; but now no more words on't
Till we be set at dinner, for there will mirth
Be the most useful for digestiön.
See, my best guests are coming.

Enter LADY AGER, *the* COLONEL'S SISTER, CAPTAIN AGER, *his two* FRIENDS, *and* SURGEON.

CAP. AGER. Recovered, sayst thou? [630
SURG. May I be excluded quite out of Surgeons' Hall else! marry, I must tell you the wound was fain to be twice corroded; 'twas a plain gastroraphe, and a deep one; but I closed the lips on't with bandages and sutures, which is a kind conjunction of the parts separated against the course of nature.
CAP. AGER. Well, sir, he is well. [639
SURG. I feared him, I assure you, captain; before the suture in the belly, it grew almost tó a convulsion, and there was like to be a bloody issue from the hollow vessels of the kidneys.
CAP. AGER. There's that, to thank thy news and thy art together. [*Gives him money.*
SURG. And if your worship at any time stand in need of incision, if it be your fortune to light into my hands, I'll give you the best. [651
CAP. AGER. Uncle, the noble colonel's recovered.
RUS. Recovered?
Then honor is not dead in all parts, coz.

Enter the COLONEL *and two* FRIENDS.

1 FR. OF CAP. Behold him yonder, sir.
CAP. AGER. My much unworthiness
Is now found out; thou'st not a face to fit it. [660
1 FR. OF COL. Sir, yonder's Captain Ager.
COL. O lieutenant,
The wrong I've done his fame puts me to silence;
Shame so confounds me, that I dare not see him.
CAP. AGER. I never knew how poör my deserts were [669
Till he appeared; no way to give requital!
Here shame me lastingly, do't with his own:
Return this to him; tell him I have riches
In that abundance in his sister's love;
These come but to oppress me, and confound
All my deservings everlastingly; [679
I never shall requite my wealth in her, say. [*Gives the will to his* FRIEND, *who delivers it to the* COLONEL.
How soon from virtue and an honored spirit
May man receive what he may never merit!
COL. This comes most happily, to express me better;
For, since this will was made, there fell to me [690
The manor of Fitzdale; give him that too;
[*Returning the will with other papers.*
He's like to have charge;
There's fair hope of my sister's fruitfulness:
For me, I never mean to change my mistress;
And war is able to maintain her servant.
1 FR. OF CAP. Read there; a fair increase, sir, by my faith; [700
He has sent it back, sir, with new additiöns.
CAP. AGER. How miserable he makes me! this enforces me
To break through all the passages of shame,
And headlong fall—
COL. Into my arms, dear worthy!

Cap. Ager. You have a goodness
Has put me past my answers; you may speak
What you please now; I must be silent ever.
Col. This day has shown me joy's unvalued treasure;
I would not change this brotherhood with a monarch;
Into which blest alliance sacred Heaven
Has placed my kinsman, and given him his ends:
Fair be that quarrel makes such happy friends! [*Exeunt.*

A NEW WAY TO PAY OLD DEBTS

BY

PHILIP MASSINGER

INTRODUCTION

In "A New Way to Pay Old Debts" Massinger reached a height such as he never approached in any other of his many plays that have come down to us. It is full of his rhetorical tricks, his bald manner of versifying, his inability to express himself clearly when he weaves his parentheses (so that sometimes—as, for instance, in the first ten or twelve speeches of IV 3—it is difficult to disentangle his meaning from the network in which, it is to be presumed, it lies hidden); it is, as usual with him, empty of the grace of style, the sense of beauty, the fire, the freedom, the charm, that draw us to his greater contemporaries; and here, as in his other plays, we find exaggeration substituted for poetry. But, when all this has been said, it yet has to be recognized that this is one of the outstanding dramas of the era. Its playcraft is masterly; it holds the interest from start to finish, and it has a capital plot, which seems to be original. The opening is magnificent, and throughout there is a great deal of clever stage "business," sufficient to account for the play's long life on the boards, though, as a matter of fact, this is mainly due to the opportunities afforded by the principal part to a star actor. But, though the character of Sir Giles Overreach is drawn on the grand scale, he is not real; like the other persons of the play, he lacks variety; like them, he is presented without light or shade. They are all good or bad, wise or foolish. It is true that Wellborn, with whom we are expected to sympathize, is made to break faith in the most cynical manner with Marrall; but we have the feeling that the dramatist considers he was perfectly justified in doing so, and that his breach of faith constitutes no blot upon his character. (That seems to be shown by the fact that even Marrall takes no exception to it.) The moral tags to which Massinger is addicted come from the most unlikely sources, every defeated villain being ready with one for his exit. The humor is of the usual Massinger order, but is less offensive and less crude than usual. Now and then one is almost moved to laughter by the absurdities of Greedy; but a humor that is based on exaggeration, as Massinger's always is, inevitably lacks the subtlety that alone makes for intellectual enjoyment. Still, when all deductions have been made, the play remains an exceedingly enjoyable one. It is on it that Massinger's high rating is almost entirely dependent.

The play was entered in the Stationers' Register in November, 1632, and printed soon afterwards. Its date of production is unknown. It contains an allusion to the siege of Breda that cannot date earlier than 1625; but that must be an insertion for a late revival. The play was not licensed by Sir Henry Herbert, and must therefore have been on the stage prior to May, 1622. More than that cannot be said. It is certainly wholly the work of Massinger, who provided the quarto with a dedication, while the allusion in the epilogue to a single writer tends to confirm Massinger's sole authorship.

CHARACTERS

Lord Lovell.
Sir Giles Overreach.
Frank Wellborn.
Tom Allworth, *a young Gentleman, Stepson to Lady Allworth, and Page to Lord Lovell.*
Greedy, *a Justice of Peace.*
Marrall, *a Term-Driver;*[1] *a creature of Sir Giles Overreach.*

[1] pettifogging lawyer.

Order, *Steward*
Amble, *Usher*
Furnace, *Cook*
Watchall, *Porter*
} *to Lady Allworth.*

Willdo, *a Parson.*
Tapwell, *an Alehouse Keeper.*
Lady Allworth, *a rich Widow.*
Margaret, *Daughter of Sir Giles Overreach.*
Froth, *Wife of Tapwell.*
Chambermaid.
Waiting Woman.
Creditors, Servants, &c.

Place: *The Country near Nottingham.*
Time: *Massinger's own day.*

A NEW WAY TO PAY OLD DEBTS

ACT ONE

SCENE I

WELLBORN *is a gentleman who has run through all his money, helped to do so by the usurious iniquity of his uncle,* SIR GILES OVERREACH. *He is now, in tattered apparel and carrying a stick, in front of* TAPWELL'S *alehouse, to which* TAPWELL *and his wife* (FROTH) *have denied him admittance. This hurts* WELLBORN *the more because it was he who had set* TAPWELL *up in business.*

WELL. No bouse? nor no tobacco?
TAP. Not a suck, sir;
Nor the remainder of a single can
Left by a drunken porter, all night palled too.
FROTH. Not the dropping of the tap for your morning's draught, sir:
'Tis verity, I assure you.
WELL. Verity, you brach![1]
The devil turned precisian![2] Rogue, what am I?
TAP. Troth, durst I trust you with a looking-glass,
To let you see your trim shape, you would quit me,
And take the name yourself.
WELL. How, dog!
TAP. Even so, sir;
And I must tell you, if you but advance
Your Plymouth cloak,[3] you shall be soon instructed
There dwells, and within call, if it please your worship,
A potent monarch called the constable,
That does command a citadel called the stocks,
Whose guards are certain files of rusty billmen,
Such as with great dexterity will hale
Your tattered, lousy—
WELL. Rascal! slave!
FROTH. No rage, sir.
TAP. At his own peril. Do not put yourself
In too much heat, there being no water near
To quench your thirst; and sure, for other liquor,
As mighty ale, or beer, they are things, I take it,
You must no more remember; not in a dream, sir.
WELL. Why, thou unthankful villain, dar'st thou talk thus?
Is not thy house, and all thou hast, my gift?
TAP. I find it not in chalk;[4] and Timothy Tapwell
Does keep no other register.
WELL. Am not I he
Whose riots fed and clothed thee? wert thou not
Born on my father's land and proud to be
A drudge in his house?
TAP. What I was, sir, it skills[5] not;
What you are, is apparent. Now, for a farewell,
Since you talk of father, in my hope it will torment you,
I'll briefly tell your story. Your dead father,
My quondam master, was a man of worship,
Old Sir John Wellborn, justice of peace and quorum,
And stood fair to be custos rotulorum;[6]
Bore the whole sway of the shire, kept a great house,
Relieved the poor, and so forth; but, he dying,

[1] bitch. [2] Puritan. [3] a cudgel.
[4] the reckoning.
[5] matters.
[6] keeper of the records.

And the twelve hundred a year coming to you,
Late Master Francis, but now forlorn Wellborn—
WELL. Slave, stop! or I shall lose myself.
FROTH. Very hardly;
You cannot out of your way.
TAP. But to my story: [89
You were then a lord of acres, the prime gallant,
And I your under-butler; note the change now:
You had a merry time of't; hawks and hounds,
With choice of running horses; mistresses
Of all sorts and all sizes, yet so hot
As their embraces made your lordship melt; [99
Which your uncle, Sir Giles Overreach, observing
(Resolving not to lose a drop of 'em),
On foolish mortgages, statutes, and bonds,
For a while supplied your looseness, and then left you.
WELL. Some curate hath penned this invective, mongrel,
And you have studied it.
TAP. I have not done yet: [110
Your land gone, and your credit not worth a token,
You grew the common borrower; no man 'scaped
Your paper-pellets,[7] from the gentleman
To the beggars on highways, that sold you switches
In your gallantry.
WELL. I shall switch your brains out.
TAP. Where poor Tim Tapwell, with a little stock, [121
Some forty pounds or so, bought a small cottage;
Humbled myself to marriage with my Froth here,
Gave entertainment—
WELL. Yes, to whores and canters,[8]
Clubbers by night.[9]
TAP. True, but they brought in profit,

[7] promissory notes.
[8] beggars.
[9] Highwaymen, footpads.

And had a gift to pay for what they called for, [131
And stuck not like your mastership. The poor income
I gleaned from them hath made me in my parish
Thought worthy to be scavenger, and in time
I may rise to be overseer of the poor;
Which if I do, on your petition, Wellborn,
[I] may allow you thirteen-pence a quarter, [141
And you shall thank my worship.
WELL. Thus, you dog-bolt,
And thus— [*Beats and kicks him.*
TAP., *to his wife.* Cry out for help!
WELL. Stir, and thou diest:
Your potent prince, the constable, shall not save you.
Hear me, ungrateful hell-hound! did not I [150
Make purses for you? then you licked my boots,
And thought your holiday cloak too coarse to clean them.
'Twas I that, when I heard thee swear, if ever
Thou couldst arrive at forty pounds, thou wouldst
Live like an emperor, 'twas I that gave it
In ready gold. Deny this, wretch! [160
TAP. I must, sir;
For, from the tavern to the taphouse, all,
On forfeiture of their licenses, stand bound
Ne'er to remember who their best guests were,
If they grew poor like you.
WELL. They are well rewarded
That beggar themselves to make such cuckolds rich. [171
Thou viper, thankless viper! impudent bawd!—
But, since you are grown forgetful, I will help
Your memory, and tread you into mortar,
Nor leave one bone unbroken. [*Beats him again.*
TAP. Oh!
FROTH. Ask mercy. [180

Enter ALLWORTH.

WELL. 'Twill not be granted.
ALL. Hold—for my sake, hold.
Deny me, Frank! they are not worth your anger.
WELL. For once thou hast redeemed them from this sceptre; [*Showing his cudgel.*
But let them vanish, creeping on their knees, [190
And, if they grumble, I revoke my pardon.
FROTH. <This comes of your prating, husband; you presumed
On your ambling wit, and must use your glib tongue,
Though you are beaten lame for't.
TAP. Patience, Froth;
There's law to cure our bruises.> [*They go into the inn on their hands and knees.* [201
WELL. Sent to your mother?
ALL. My lady, Frank, my patroness, my all!
She's such a mourner for my father's death,
And, in her love to him, so favors me,
That I cannot pay too much observance to her;
There are few such stepdames. [210
WELL. 'Tis a noble widow,
And keeps her reputation pure and clear
From the least taint of infamy; her life,
With the splendor of her actions, leaves no tongue
To envy or detraction. Prithee tell me,
Has she no suitors?
ALL. Even the best of the shire, Frank,
My lord excepted; such as sue and send,
And send and sue again, but to no purpose: [221
Their frequent visits have not gained her presence.
Yet she's so far from sullenness and pride
That I dare undertake you shall meet from her
A liberal entertainment: I can give you
A catalogue of her suitors' names.
WELL. Forbear it,
While I give you good counsel: I am bound to it. [231
Thy father was my friend, and that affection
I bore to him, in right descends to thee;
Thou art a handsome and a hopeful youth,
Nor will I have the least affront stick on thee,
If I with any danger can prevent it.
ALL. I thank your noble care; but, pray you, in what [241
Do I run the hazard?
WELL. Art thou not in love?
Put it not off with wonder.[10]
ALL. In love, at my years?
WELL. You think you walk in clouds, but are transparent.
I have heard all, and the choice that you have made,
And with my finger can point out the north star [251
By which the loadstone of your folly's guided;
And, to confirm this true, what think you of
Fair Margaret, the only child and heir
Of Cormorant Overreach? Does it blush and start,
To hear her only named? blush at your want [260
Of wit and reason.
ALL. You are too bitter, sir.
WELL. Wounds of this nature are not to be cured
With balms, but córrosives. I must be plain:
Art thou scarce manumised from the porter's lodge
And yet sworn servant to the pantofle,[11]
And dar'st thou dream of marriäge? I fear [271
'Twill be concluded for impossible
That there is now or[12] e'er shall be hereafter
A handsome page or player's boy of fourteen
But either loves a wench or drabs love him;
Court-waiters not exempted.
ALL. This is madness. [280
Howe'er you have discovered my intents,

[10] affected surprise.
[11] slipper. [12] Q, "Nor."

You know my aims are lawful; and, if ever
The queen of flowers, the glory of the spring,
The sweetest comfort to our smell, the rose,
Sprang from an envious[13] briar, I may infer [289
There's such disparity in their conditions
Between the goddess of my soul, the daughter,
And the base churl, her father.
WELL. Grant this true,
As I believe it, canst thou ever hope
To enjoy a quiet bed with her whose father
Ruined thy state?
ALL. And yours too.
WELL. I confess it; [300
True; I must tell you as a friend, and freely,
That, where impossibilities are apparent,
'Tis indiscretiön to nourish hopes.
Canst thou imagine (let not self-love blind thee)
That Sir Giles Overreach, that, to make her great
In swelling titles, without touch of conscience [310
Will cut his neighbor's throat (and, I hope, his own too),
Will e'er consent to make her thine? Give o'er,
And think of some course suitable to thy rank,
And prosper in it.
ALL. You have well advised me;
But in the meantime you that are so studious [320
Of my affairs wholly neglect your own:
Remember yourself, and in what plight you are.
WELL. No matter, no matter!
ALL. Yes, 'tis much material:[14]
You know my fortune and my means; yet something
I can spare from myself to help your wants. [*Gives him money.*
WELL. How's this? [330

[13] malicious.
[14] very important.

ALL. Nay, be not angry; there's eight pieces,[15]
To put you in better fashion.
WELL. Money from thee!
From a boy! a stipendiary! one that lives
At the devotion of a stepmother
And the uncertain favor of a lord!
I'll eat my arms first. Howsoe'er blind Fortune [340
Hath spent the utmost of her malice on me—
Though I am vomited out of an alehouse
And thus accoutred, know not where to eat,
Or drink, or sleep, but underneath this canopy—[16]
Although I thank thee, I despise thy offer; [349
And, as I in my madness broke my state
Without the assistance of another's brain,
In my right wits I'll piece it; at the worst,
Die thus and be forgotten.
ALL. A strange humor!

SCENE II

In a room in LADY ALLWORTH'S *house, on the same day,* ORDER, AMBLE, FURNACE, *and* WATCHALL *discuss the affairs of their mistress.*

ORD. Set all things right, or, as my name is Order,
And by this staff of office that commands you,
This chain and double ruff, symbols of power, [10
Whoever misses in his functiön,
For one whole week makes forfeiture of his breakfast
And privilege in the wine-cellar.
AMB. You are merry,
Good master steward.
FUR. Let him; I'll be angry.
AMB. Why, fellow Furnace, 'tis not twelve o'clock yet, [19
Nor dinner taking up; then, 'tis allowed,
Cooks, by their places, may be choleric.
FUR. You think you have spoke wisely, goodman Amble,

[15] of about 5½ dollars.
[16] the sky.

My lady's go-before!
ORD. Nay, nay, no wrangling.
FUR. Twit me with the authority of the kitchen!
At all hours and all places I'll be angry;
And, thus provoked, when I am at my prayers
I will be angry.
AMB. There was no hurt meant.
FUR. I am friends with thee; and yet I will be angry.
ORD. With whom?
FUR. No matter whom: yet, now I think on it,
I am angry with my lady.
WAT. Heaven forbid, man!
ORD. What cause has she given thee?
FUR. Cause enough, master steward.
I was entertained by her to please her palate;
And, till she forswore eating, I performed it.
Now, since our master, noble Allworth, died,
Though I crack my brains to find out tempting sauces,
And raise fortifications in the pastry
Such as might serve for models in the Low Countries;
Which, if they had been practisëd at Breda,[17]
Spinola might have thrown his cap at it, and ne'er took it—
AMB. But you had wanted matter there to work on.
FUR. Matter! with six eggs and a strike[18] of rye meal,
I had kept the town till doomsday, perhaps longer.
ORD. But what's this to your pet[19] against my lady?
FUR. What's this? marry, this; when I am three parts roasted
And the fourth part parboiled, to prepare her viands,
She keeps her chamber, dines with a panada[20]
Or water-gruel, my sweat never thought on.
ORD. But your art is seen in the dining-room.
FUR. By whom?
By such as pretend love to her, but come
To feed upon her. Yet, of all the harpies
That do devour her, I am out of charity
With none so much as the thin-gutted squire
That's stolen into commission.[21]
ORD. Justice Greedy?
FUR. The same, the same: meat's cast away upon him,
It never thrives. He holds this paradox,
Who eats not well can ne'er do justice well:
His stomach's as insatiate as the grave
Or strumpets' ravenous appetites.
[*Knocking within.*
WAT. One knocks. [*Exit.*

WATCHALL *ushers in* ALLWORTH.

ORD. Our late young master!
AMB. Welcome, sir.
FUR. Your hand;
If you have a stomach, a cold bake-meat's ready.
ORD. His father's picture in little.
FUR. We are all your servants.
AMB. In you he lives.
ALL. At once, my thanks to all;
This is yet some comfort. Is my lady stirring?

Enter LADY ALLWORTH, WAITING-WOMAN, *and* CHAMBERMAID.

ORD. Her presence answers for us.
LADY ALL. Sort those silks well:
I'll take the air alone. [*Exeunt* WAITING-WOMAN *and* CHAMBERMAID.
FUR. You air and air;
But will you never taste but spoon-meat more?
To what use serve I?
LADY ALL. Prithee, be not angry;
I shall ere long; i' the meantime, there is gold
To buy thee aprons and a summer suit.
FUR. I am appeased, and Furnace now grows cool.[22]

[17] Taken by the Spaniards under Spinola in 1625 after a ten months' siege.
[18] pinch. [19] anger.
[20] toasted bread soaked in milk.
[21] obtained his commission by fraud.
[22] The original has "Cooke".

LADY ALL. And, as I gave directions, if this morning
I am visited by any, entertain 'em
As heretofore; but say, in my excuse,
I am indisposed.
ORD. I shall, madam.
LADY ALL. Do, and leave me.—
Nay, stay you, Allworth. [*Exeunt* ORDER, AMBLE, FURNACE, *and* WATCHALL.
ALL. I shall gladly grow here,
To wait on your commands. [130
LADY ALL. So soon turned courtier?
ALL. Style not that courtship, madam, which is duty
Purchased on your part.
LADY ALL. Well, you shall o'ercome;
I'll not contend in words. How is it with
Your noble master?
ALL. Ever like himself,
No scruple lessened in the full weight of honor. [140
He did command me, pardon my presumption,
As his unworthy deputy, to kiss
Your ladyship's fair hands. [*Kisses her hand.*
LADY ALL. I am honored in
His favor to me. Does he hold his purpose
For the Low Countries?
ALL. Constantly, good madam; [150
But he will in person first present his service.
LADY ALL. And how approve you of his course? you are yet
Like virgin parchment, capable of any
Inscription, viciöus or honorable.
I will not force your will, but leave you free
To your own election.[23]
ALL. Any form you please [160
I will put on; but, might I make my choice,
With humble emulation I would follow
The path my lord marks to me.
LADY ALL. 'Tis well answered,
And I commend your spirit: you had a father,
Blessëd be his memory! that, some few hours [169
Before the will of Heaven took him from me,
Who did commend you, by the dearest ties
Of perfect love between us, to my charge;
And, therefore, what I speak you are bound to hear
With such respect as if he lived in me.
He was my husband, and, howe'er you are not [180
Son of my womb, you may be of my love,
Provided you deserve it.
ALL. I have found you,
Most honored madam, the best mother to me;
And, with my utmost strengths of care and service,
Will labor that you never may repent
Your bounties showered upon me.
LADY ALL. I much hope it. [190
These were your father's words: "If e'er my son
Follow the war, tell him it is a school
Where all the principles tending to honor
Are taught, if truly followed; but, for such
As repair thither, as a place in which
They do presume they may with license practise [199
Their lusts and riots, they shall never merit
The noble name of soldiers. To dare boldly,
In a fair cause, and, for the[ir] country's safety,
To run upon the cannon's mouth undaunted;
To obey their leaders, and shun mutinies;
To bear with patiënce the winter's cold
And summer's scorching heat; and not to faint, [211
When plenty of provision fails, with hunger:
Are the essential parts make up a soldier,
Not swearing, dice, or drinking."
ALL. There's no syllable
You speak but is to me an oracle,
Which but to doubt were impious.
LADY ALL. To conclude:
Beware ill company, for often men [220

[23] choosing.

Are like to those with whom they do converse;
And, from one man I warn[24] you, and that's Wellborn;
Not 'cause he's poor (that rather claims your pity);
But that he's in his manners so debauched,
And hath to vicious courses sold himself.
'Tis true, your father loved him, while he was [231
Worthy the loving; but, if he had lived
To have seen him as he is, he had cast him off,
As you must do.
ALL. I shall obey in all things.
LADY ALL. Follow[25] me to my chamber, you shall have gold,
To furnish you like my son, and still supplied, [240
As I hear from you.
ALL. I am still your creature. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

A little later in the day, SIR GILES OVERREACH, *of a build matching his dominating personality, is endeavoring to see* LADY ALLWORTH, *but has met only* ORDER, FURNACE, WATCHALL, *and* AMBLE, *who have received him in the hall of her residence. He is accompanied by* MARRALL *and* GREEDY, *the thinness of the latter affording a great contrast to the bulk of* SIR GILES. [10

GRE. Not to be seen?
OVER. Still cloistered up? Her reason,
I hope, assures her, though she make herself
Close prisoner ever for her husband's loss,
'Twill not recover him.
ORD. Sir, it is her will, [19
Which we, that are her servants, ought to serve,[26]
And not dispute. Howe'er, you are nobly welcome;
And, if you please to stay, that you may think so,
There came, not six days since, from Hull, a pipe[27]
Of rich Canary, which shall spend itself
For my lady's honor.
GRE. Is it of the right race?[28] [30
ORD. Yes, Master Greedy.
AMB., *to* FURNACE. <How his mouth runs o'er!
FUR. I'll make it run and run.> Save your good worship!
GRE. Honest Master Cook, thy hand. [*They shake hands.*] Again: how I love thee!
Are the good dishes still in being? speak, boy. [40
FUR. If you have a mind to feed, there is a chine
Of beef, well seasoned.
GRE. Good!
FUR. A pheasant, larded.
GRE. That I might now give thanks for't!
FUR. Other kickshaws.
Besides, there came last night, from the forest of Sherwood, [50
The fattest stag I ever cooked.
GRE. A stag, man?
FUR. A stag, sir; part of it prepared for dinner,
And baked in puff-paste.
GRE. Puff-paste too!—Sir Giles,
A ponderous chine of beef! a pheasant larded!
And red deer too, Sir Giles, and baked in puff-paste! [60
All business set aside, let us give thanks here.[29]
FUR. <How the lean skeleton's rapt!>
OVER. You know we cannot.
MAR. Your worships are to sit on a commission;
And, if you fail to come, you lose the cause.
GRE. Cause me no causes. I'll prove't, for such a dinner, [70
We may put off a commission: you shall find it
Henrici decimo quarto.
OVER. Fie, Master Greedy!
Will you lose me a thousand pounds for a dinner?

[24] Q, "warned."
[25] Q, "You follow."
[26] Q, "serve it."
[27] cask. [28] vintage. [29] now.

No more, for shame! we must forget the belly
When we think of profit.
GRE. Well, you shall o'er-rule me. [80
<I could e'en cry now.> Do you hear, Master Cook:
Send but a corner of that immortal pasty,
And I, in thankfulness, will, by your boy,
Send you—a brace of three-pences.
FUR. <Will you be so prodigal?>

Enter WELLBORN.

OVER. Remember me to your lady.—Who have we here?
WELL. You know me. [90
OVER. I did once, but now I will not;
Thou art no blood of mine. Avaunt, thou beggar!
If ever thou presume to own me more,
I'll have thee caged and whipped.
GRE. I'll grant the warrant.—
<Think of pie-corner, Furnace!>
[*Exeunt* OVERREACH, GREEDY, *and* MARRALL. [100
WAT. Will you out, sir?
I wonder how you durst creep in.
ORD. This is rudeness,
And saucy impudence.
AMB. Cannot you stay
To be served, among your fellows, from the basket,[30]
But you must press into the hall?
FUR. Prithee, vanish [109
Into some outhouse, though it be the pig-sty;
My scullion shall come to thee.

Enter ALLWORTH.

WELL. This is rare!
Oh, here's Tom Allworth.—Tom!
ALL. We must be strangers;
Nor would I have you seen here for a million. [*Exit.*
WELL. Better and better! He contemns me too! [120

Enter WAITING-WOMAN *and* CHAMBERMAID.

WOM. Foh, what a smell's here! what thing's this?

[30] the alms-basket.

CHAM. A creature
Made out of the privy; let us hence, for love's sake,
Or I shall swoon.
WOM. I begin to faint already.
[*Exeunt* WAITING-WOMAN *and* CHAMBERMAID. [131
WAT. Will [you] know your way?
AMB. Or shall we teach it you
By the head and shoulders?
WELL. No; I will not stir;
Do you mark, I will not: let me see the wretch
That dares attempt to force me. Why, you slaves, [139
Created only to make legs,[31] and cringe,
To carry in a dish and shift a trencher;
That have not souls only to hope a blessing
Beyond black-jacks[32] or flagons; you, that were born
Only to consume meat and drink, and batten[33]
Upon reversions![34]—who advances? who
Shows me the way?
ORD. My lady! [150

Enter LADY ALLWORTH, WAITING-WOMAN, *and* CHAMBERMAID.

CHAM. Here's the monster.
WOM. Sweet madam, keep your glove to your nose.
CHAM. Or let me
Fetch some perfúmes may be predominant;
You wrong yourself else.
WELL. Madam, my designs [160
Bear me to you.
LADY ALL. To me!
WELL. And, though I have met with
But ragged entertainment from your grooms here,
I hope from you to receive that noble usage
As may become the true friend of your husband;
And then I shall forget these. [170
LADY ALL. I am amazed
To see and hear this rudeness. Dar'st thou think,

[31] bows. [32] leathern tankards.
[33] feast. [34] kitchen scraps.

Though sworn, that it can ever find belief,
That I, who to the best men of this country
Denied my presence since my husband's death,
Can fall so low as to change words with thee?
Thou son of infamy! forbear my house,
And know and keep the distance that's between us;
Or, though it be against my gentler temper,
I shall take order you no more shall be
An eyesore to me.
WELL. Scorn me not, good lady;
But, as in form you are angelical,
Imitate the heavenly natures, and vouchsafe
At the least, awhile to hear me. You will grant
The blood that runs in this arm is as noble
As that which fills your veins; those costly jewels
And those rich clothes you wear, your men's observance,
And women's flattery, are in you no virtues,
Nor these rags, with my poverty, in me vices.
You have a fair fame, and, I know, deserve it;
Yet, lady, I must say, in nothing more
Than in the pious sorrow you have shown
For your late noble husband.
ORD., *to* FURNACE. <How she starts!
FUR. And hardly can keep finger from the eye,
To hear him named.>
LADY ALL. Have you aught else to say?
WELL. That husband, madam, was once in his fortune
Almost as low as I; want, debts, and quarrels
Lay heavy on him. Let it not be thought
A boast in me, though I say I relieved him:
'Twas I that gave him fashion;[35] mine the sword
That did on all occasions second his;
I brought him on and off with honor, lady;
And, when in all men's judgments he was sunk,
And, in his own hopes, not to be buoyed[36] up,
I stepped unto him, took him by the hand,
And set him upright.
FUR. <Are not we base rogues,
That could forget this?>
WELL. I confess, you made him
Master of your estate; nor could your friends,
Though he brought no wealth with him, blame you for it;
For he had a shape, and to that shape a mind
Made up of all parts either great or noble;
So winning a behavior, not to be
Resisted, madam.
LADY ALL. 'Tis most true, he had.
WELL. For his sake, then, in that I was his friend,
Do not contemn me.
LADY ALL. For what's past, excuse me;
I will redeem it.—Order, give the gentleman
A hundred pounds.
WELL. No, madam, on no terms:
I will nor beg nor borrow sixpence of you,
But be supplied elsewhere, or want thus ever.
Only one suit I make, which you deny not
To strangers; and 'tis this. [*Whispers to her.*
LADY ALL. Fie! nothing else?
WELL. Nothing, unless you please to charge your servants
To throw away a little respect upon me.
LADY ALL. What you demand is yours.
WELL. I thank you, lady.

[35] introduced him to fashionable society.
[36] Q, "bung'd."

Now what can be wrought out of such a suit
Is yet in supposition. I have said all;
When you please, you may retire.
[*Exit* Lady Allworth.
[*To the Servants.*] Nay, all's forgotten;
And, for lucky omen to my project, [280
Shake hands, and end all quarrels in the cellar.
Ord. Agreed, agreed.
Fur. Still merry Master Wellborn!
[*Exeunt.*

ACT TWO

Scene I

The next morning, in a room in Overreach's *house,* Overreach *and* Marrall *discuss the former's most recent piece of iniquity, whereby some poor farmer has been ruined.*

Over. He's gone, I warrant thee; this commission crushed him.
Mar. Your worships have the way on't, and ne'er miss [9
To squeeze these unthrifts into air; and yet
The chapfallen[1] justice did his part, returning,
For your advantage, the certificate,
Against his conscience and his knowledge too,
With your good favor, to the utter ruin
Of the poor farmer.
Over. 'Twas for these good ends
I made him a justice: he that bribes his belly [21
Is certain to command his soul.
Mar. I wonder,
Still with your license, why, your worship having
The power to put this thin-gut in commission,
You are not in't yourself?
Over. Thou art a fool;
In being out of office I am out of danger; [31
Where, if I were a justice, besides the trouble,
I might or out of wilfulness or error
Run myself finely into a premunire,[2]
And so become a prey to the informer.
No, I'll have none of't; 'tis enough I keep
Greedy at my devotion[3]: so he serve
My purposes, let him hang or damn, I care not; [41
Friendship is but a word.
Mar. You are all wisdom.
Over. I would be wordly wise; for the other wisdom,
That does prescribe us a well governed life,
And to do right to others as ourselves,
I value not an atom.
Mar. What course take you,
With your good patience, to hedge in the manor [51
Of your neighbor, Master Frugal? as 'tis said
He will nor sell nor borrow nor exchange;
And his land, lying in the midst of your many lordships,
Is a foul blemish.
Over. I have thought on't, Marrall,
And it shall take. I must have all men sellers, [60
And I the only purchaser.
Mar. 'Tis most fit, sir.
Over. I'll therefore buy some cottage near his manor,
Which done, I'll make my men break ope his fences,
Ride o'er his standing corn, and in the night
Set fire on his barns or break his cattle's legs: [70
These trespasses draw on suits, and suits expenses,
Which I can spare, but will soon beggar him.
When I have harried him thus two or three year,
Though he sue *in forma pauperis,* in spite
Of all his thrift and care, he'll grow behindhand. [79
Mar. The best I ever heard! I could adore you.
Over. Then, with the favor of my man of law,

[1] hatchet-faced.

[2] encroachment on the privileges of the Crown.
[3] devoted to me.

I will pretend some title: want will force him
To put it to arbitrament; then, if he sell
For half the value, he shall have ready money,
And I possess his land.
MAR. 'Tis above wonder! [90
Wellborn was apt to sell, and needed not
These fine arts, sir, to hook him in.
OVER. Well thought on.
This varlet, Marrall, lives too long, to upbraid me
With my close cheat put upon him. Will nor cold
Nor hunger kill him?
MAR. I know not what to think on't.
I have used all means; and the last night I caused [101
His host, the tapster, to turn him out of doors;
And have been since with all your friends and tenants,
And, on the forfeit of your favor, charged them,
Though a crust of mouldy bread would keep him from starving,
Yet they should not relieve him. This is done, sir. [111
OVER. That was something, Marrall; but thou must go further,
And suddenly, Marrall.
MAR. Where, and when you please, sir.
OVER. I would have thee seek him out, and, if thou canst,
Persuade him that 'tis better steal than beg; [120
Then, if I prove he has but robbed a henroost,
Not all the world shall save him from the gallows.
Do anything to work him to despair;
And 'tis thy masterpiece.
MAR. I will do my best, sir.
OVER. I am now on my main work with the Lord Lovell, [129
The gallant-minded, popular Lord Lovell,
The minion of the people's love. I hear
He's come into the country, and my aims are
To insinuate myself into his knowledge,
And then invite him to my house.
MAR. I have you;
This points at my young mistress.
OVER. She must part with
That humble title, and write honorable,
Right honorable, Marrall, my right honorable daughter, [141
If all I have, or e'er shall get, will do it.
I will have her well attended; there are ladies
Of errant[4] knights decayed and brought so low,
That for cast clothes and meat will gladly serve her;
And 'tis my glory, though I come from the city, [150
To have their issue whom I have undone,
To kneel to mine as bondslaves.
MAR. 'Tis fit state, sir.
OVER. And therefore, I'll not have a chambermaid
That ties her shoes or any meaner office
But such whose fathers were right worshipful.
'Tis a rich man's pride! there having ever been [160
More than a feud, a strange antipathy,
Between us and true gentry.

Enter WELLBORN.

MAR. See who's here, sir.
OVER. Hence, monster! prodigy!
WELL. Sir, your wife's nephew;
She and my father tumbled in one belly.
OVER. Avoid my sight! thy breath's infectious, rogue! [169
I shun thee as a leprosy, or the plague.
Come hither, Marrall: <this is the time to work him.
MAR. I warrant you, sir.> [*Exit* OVERREACH.
WELL. By this light, I think he's mad.
MAR. Mad! had you ta'en compassion on yourself,
You long since had been mad.
WELL. You have ta'en a course,
Between you and my venerable uncle, [180
To make me so.
MAR. The more pale-spirited you,
That would not be instructed. I swear deeply—

[4] arrant, unquestioned.

WELL. By what?
MAR. By my religion.
WELL. Thy religion!
The devil's creed. But what would you have done? [189
MAR. Had there been but one tree in all the shire,
Nor any hope to compass a penny halter,
Before, like you, I had outlived my fortunes,
A withe had served my turn to hang myself.
I am zealous in your cause; pray you hang yourself,
And presently,[5] as you love your credit.
WELL. I thank you. [200
MAR. Will you stay till you die in a ditch or lice devour you?
Or, if you dare not do the feat yourself,
But that you'll put the state to charge and trouble,
Is there no purse to be cut, house to be broken,
Or market-woman with eggs that you may murder,
And so dispatch the business? [210
WELL. Here's variety,
I must confess; but I'll accept of none
Of all your gentle offers, I assure you.
MAR. Why, have you hope ever to eat again,
Or drink, or be the master of three farthings?
If you like not hanging, drown yourself! take some course
For your reputation. [220
WELL. 'Twill not do, dear tempter,
With all the rhetoric the fiend hath taught you.
I am as far as thou art from despair;
Nay, I have confidence, which is more than hope,
To live, and suddenly, better than ever.
MAR. Ha! ha! these castles you build in the air [229
Will not persuade me or to give or lend
A token to you.
WELL. I'll be more kind to thee:
Come, thou shalt dine with me.
MAR. With you!
WELL. Nay more, dine gratis.

[5] straightway.

MAR. Under what hedge, I pray you? or at whose cost?
Are they padders[6] or abram-men[7] that are your consorts? [239
WELL. Thou art incredulous; but thou shalt dine,
Not alone at her house, but with a gallant lady;
With me, and with a lady.
MAR. Lady! what lady?
With the Lady of the Lake, or Queen of Fairies?
For I know it must be an enchanted dinner. [249
WELL. With the Lady Allworth, knave.
MAR. Nay, now there's hope
Thy brain is cracked.
WELL. Mark there with what respect
I am entertained.
MAR. With choice, no doubt, of dog-whips.
Why, dost thou ever hope to pass her porter?
WELL. 'Tis not far off, go with me; trust thine own eyes. [260
MAR. Troth, in my hope, or my assurance rather,
To see thee curvet and mount like a dog in a blanket,
If ever thou presume to pass her threshold,
I will endure thy company.
WELL. Come along then.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

The same morning, in a room in LADY ALLWORTH'S *house, her two women are striving to dissuade* ALLWORTH *from returning so soon to his master. The four men-servants are also present. They have been given strict and precise instructions as to how they must receive* WELLBORN, *who is expected.*

WOM. Could you not command your leisure one hour longer? [10
CHAM. Or half an hour?
ALL. I have told you what my haste is:

[6] footpads.
[7] vagabonds who obtain alms by feigning madness.

Besides, being now another's, not mine own,
Howe'er I much desire to enjoy you longer,
My duty suffers, if, to please myself,
I should neglect my lord.
WOM. Pray you do me the favor
To put these few quince-cakes into your pocket;
They are of mine own preserving.
CHAM. And this marmalade;
'Tis comfortable for your stomach.
WOM. And, at parting,
Excuse me if I beg a farewell from you.
CHAM. You are still before me. I move the same suit, sir. [ALLWORTH *kisses them severally.*
FUR. <How greedy these chamberers are of a beardless chin!
I thinks the tits will ravish him.>
ALL. My service
To both.
WOM. Ours waits on you.
CHAM. And shall do ever.
ORD. You are my lady's charge, be therefore careful
That you sustain your parts.
WOM. We can bear, I warrant you.
[*Exeunt* WAITING-WOMAN *and* CHAMBERMAID.
FUR. Here, drink it off; the ingredients are cordial,
And this the true elixir; it hath boiled
Since midnight for you. 'Tis the quintessence
Of five cocks of the game,[8] ten dozen of sparrows,
Knuckles of veal, potato-roots and marrow,
Coral and ambergris. Were you two years older,
And I had a wife or gamesome mistress,
I durst trust you with neither: you need not bait
After this, I warrant you, though your journey's long;
You may ride on the strength of this till to-morrow morning.
ALL. Your courtesies overwhelm me: I much grieve
To part from such true friends, and yet find comfort;
My attendance on my honorable lord,
Whose resolution holds to visit my lady,
Will speedily bring me back. [*Knocking within.*
MAR., *within.* Dar'st thou venture further?
WELL., *within.* Yes, yes, and knock again. [*Exit* WATCHALL.
ORD. 'Tis he; disperse!
AMB. Perform it bravely.
FUR. I know my cue, ne'er doubt me.
[*Exeunt all but* ALLWORTH.

Re-enter WATCHALL, *ceremoniously introducing* WELLBORN *and* MARRALL.

WAT. Beast that I was, to make you stay! most welcome;
You were long since expected.
WELL. Say so much
To my friend, I pray you.
WAT. For your sake, I will, sir.
MAR. <For his sake!>
WELL. <Mum; this is nothing.
MAR. More than ever
I would have believed, though I had found it in my primer.>
ALL. When I have given you reasons for my late harshness,
You'll pardon and excuse me; for, believe me,
Though now I part abruptly, in my service
I will deserve it.
MAR. <Service! with a vengeance!>
WELL. I am satisfied: farewell, Tom.
ALL. All joy stay with you! [*Exit.*

Re-enter AMBLE.

AMB., *obsequiously.* You are happily encountered; I yet never
Presented one so welcome as I know
You will be to my lady.
MAR. <This is some vision,
Or, sure, these men are mad, to worship a dunghill;
It cannot be a truth.
WELL. Be still a pagan,
An unbelieving infidel; be so, miscreant,
And meditate on "blankets," and on "dog-whips"!>

[8] gamecocks.

Re-enter FURNACE.

FUR., *deferentially*. I am glad you are come; until I know your pleasure,
I knew not how to serve up my lady's dinner.
MAR. <His pleasure! is it possible?>
WELL. What's thy will? [120
FUR. Marry, sir, I have some grouse, and turkey chicken,
Some rails and quails, and my lady willed me ask you
What kind of sauces best affect your palate,
That I may use my utmost skill to please it.
MAR. <The devil's entered this cook: sauce for his palate, [130
That, on my knowledge, for almost this twelve-month,
Durst wish but cheese-parings and brown bread on Sundays!>
WELL., *who has been talking aside to* FURNACE. That way I like them best.
FUR. It shall be done, sir. [*Exit.*
WELL. What think you of "the hedge we shall dine under"? [140
Shall we feed gratis?
MAR. I know not what to think;
Pray you make me not mad.

Re-enter ORDER.

ORD., *bowing low*. This place becomes you not;
Pray you walk, sir, to the dining-room.
WELL. I am well here,
Till her ladyship quits her chamber.
MAR. <Well here, say you? [150
'Tis a rare change! but yesterday you thought
Yourself well in a barn, wrapped up in peas-straw.>

Re-enter WAITING-WOMAN *and* CHAMBERMAID.

WOM. Oh! sir, you are wished for.
CHAM. My lady dreamt, sir, of you.
WOM. And the first command she gave after she rose, [160
Was (her devotions done) to give her notice
When you approached here.
CHAM. Which is done, on my virtue.
MAR. <I shall be converted; I begin to grow
Into a new belief, which saints nor angels
Could have won me to have faith in.>
WOM. Sir, my lady! [169

Enter LADY ALLWORTH.

LADY ALL. I come to meet you, and languished till I saw you. [*Kisses* WELLBORN.
This first kiss is for form; I allow a second
To such a friend. [*Kisses him again.*
MAR. <To such a friend! Heaven bless me!>
WELL. I am wholly yours; yet, madam, if you please [180
To grace this gentleman with a salute—
MAR. <Salute me at his bidding!>
WELL. I shall receive it
As a most high favor.
LADY ALL. Sir, you may command me.
[*Advances to kiss* MARRALL, *who retires.*
WELL. Run backward from a lady! and such a lady! [189
MAR. To kiss her foot is, to poor me, a favor
I am unworthy of. [*Offers to kiss her foot.*
LADY ALL. Nay, pray you rise;
And, since you are so humble, I'll exalt you:
You shall dine with me to-day at mine own table.
MAR. Your ladyship's table! I am not good enough [200
To sit at your steward's board.
LADY ALL. You are too modest:
I will not be denied.

Re-enter FURNACE.

FUR. Will you still be babbling,
Till your meat freeze on the table? the old trick still;
My art ne'er thought on!
LADY ALL. Your arm, Master Wellborn.— [210
[*To* MARRALL.] Nay, keep us company.
MAR. I was ne'er so graced.

[*Exeunt* WELLBORN, LADY ALLWORTH, AMBLE, MARRALL, WAITING-WOMAN, *and* CHAMBERMAID.

ORD. So! we have played our parts, and are come off well;
But if I know the mystery, why my lady
Consented to it, or why Master Wellborn
Desired it, may I perish! [220

FUR. Would I had
The roasting of his heart that cheated him,
And forces the poor gentleman to these shifts!
By fire!—for cooks are Persians, and swear by it—
Of all the griping and extorting tyrants
I ever heard or read of, I ne'er met
A match to Sir Giles Overreach. [230

WAT. What will you take
To tell him so, fellow Furnace?

FUR. Just as much
As my throat is worth, for that would be the price on't.
To have a usurer that starves himself,
And wears a cloak of one and twenty years
On a suit of fourteen groats,[9] bought of the hangman, [240
To grow rich, and then purchase, is too common;
But this Sir Giles feeds high, keeps many servants,
Who must at his command do any outrage;
Rich in his habit, vast in his expenses;
Yet he to admiration[10] still increases
In wealth and lordships. [249

ORD. He frights men out of their estates,
And breaks through all law-nets, made to curb ill men,
As they were cobwebs. No man dares reprove him.
Such a spirit to dare and power to do were never
Lodged so unluckily.

Re-enter AMBLE.

AMB. Ha, ha! I shall burst. [260

ORD. Contain thyself, man.

FUR. Or make us partakers
Of your sudden mirth.

AMB. Ha, ha! my lady has got
Such a guest at her table!—this term-driver, Marrall,
This snip of an attorney—

FUR. What of him, man?

AMB. The knave thinks still he's at the cook's shop in Ram Alley, [270
Where the clerks divide and the elder is to choose;
And feeds so slovenly!

FUR. Is this all?

AMB. My lady
Drank to him, for fashion sake or to please Master Wellborn;
As I live, he rises, and takes up a dish
In which there were some remnants of a boiled capon, [280
And pledges her in white broth!

FUR. Nay, 'tis like
The rest of his tribe.

AMB. And, when I brought him wine,
He leaves his stool, and, after a leg[11] or two,
Most humbly thanks my worship.

ORD., *looking off*. Rose already?

AMB. I shall be chid. [289

Re-enter LADY ALLWORTH, WELLBORN, *and* MARRALL.

FUR. <My lady frowns.>

LADY ALL., *to* AMBLE. You wait well!
Let me have no more of this; I observed your jeering:
Sirrah, I'll have you know, whom I think worthy
To sit at my table, be he ne'er so mean,
When I am present, is not your companion. [300

ORD. <Nay, she'll preserve what's due to her.

FUR. This refreshing
Follows your flux of laughter.>

LADY ALL., *to* WELLBORN. You are master
Of your own will. I know so much of manners
As not to inquire your purposes; in a word, [310

[9] a little over a dollar.
[10] wonder.
[11] bow.

To me you are ever welcome, as to a house
That is your own.
WELL., *to* MARRALL. <Mark that.
MAR. With reverence, sir,
An it like your worship.>
WELL. Trouble yourself no further,
Dear madam; my heart's full of zeal and service,
However in my language I am sparing.—
Come, Master Marrall.
MAR. I attend your worship.
[*Exeunt* WELLBORN *and* MARRALL.
LADY ALL. I see in your looks you are sorry, and you know me
An easy mistress: be merry; I have forgot all.—
Order and Furnace, come with me; I must give you
Further directions.
ORD. What you please.
FUR. We are ready.
[*Exit, with* ORDER, *following* LADY ALLWORTH.

SCENE III

WELLBORN *and the astounded* MARRALL *are on the road somewhere between* LADY ALLWORTH'S *home and that of* SIR GILES OVERREACH. MARRALL *is so overcome by his sense of the importance of* WELLBORN *that he is walking bareheaded.*

WELL. I think I am in a good way.
MAR. Good, sir? the best way,
The certain best way.
WELL. There are casualties
That men are subject to.
MAR. You are above them;
And, as you are already worshipful,
I hope ere long you will increase in worship,
And be right worshipful.
WELL. Prithee do not flout me:
What I shall be, I shall be. Is't for your ease,
You keep your hat off?
MAR. Ease? an it like your worship,
I hope Jack Marrall shall not live so long,
To prove himself such an unmannerly beast,
Though it hail hazel-nuts, as to be covered
When your worship's present.
WELL. <Is not this a true rogue,
That, out of mere hope of a future cozenage,
Can turn thus suddenly? 'tis rank already.>
MAR. I know your worship's wise and needs no counsel,
Yet if, in my desire to do you service,
I humbly offer my advice (but still
Under correction), I hope I shall not
Incur your high displeasure.
WELL. No; speak freely.
MAR. Then, in my judgment, sir, my simple judgment
(Still with your worship's favor), I could wish you
A better habit, for this cannot be
But much distasteful to the noble lady
(I say no more) that loves you; for, this morning,
To me, and I am but a swine to her,
Before the assurance of her wealth perfumed you,
You savored not of amber.[12]
WELL. I do now, then?
MAR. This your batoon hath got a touch of it.— [*Kisses the end of his cudgel.*
Yet, if you please, for change,[13] I have twenty pounds here,
Which, out of my true love, I presently
Lay down at your worship's feet; 'twill serve to buy you
A riding suit.
WELL. But where's the horse?
MAR. My gelding
Is at your service: nay, you shall ride me,
Before your worship shall be put to the trouble
To walk afoot. Alas! when you are lord
Of this lady's manor, as I know you will be,
You may with the lease of glebe land, called Knave's-acre,
A place I would manure,[14] requite your vassal.

[12] ambergris. [13] *i.e.*, of attire. [14] cultivate.

WELL. I thank thy love, but must make no use of it;
What's twenty pounds?
MAR. 'Tis all that I can make,[15] sir.
WELL. Dost thou think, though I want clothes, I could not have them, [80
For one word to my lady?
MAR. As[16] I know not that!
WELL. Come, I will tell thee a secret, and so leave thee.
I will not give her the advantage, though she be
A gallant-minded lady, after we are married
(There being no woman but is sometimes froward), [90
To hit me in the teeth, and say she was forced
To buy my wedding-clothes, and took me on
With a plain riding-suit and an ambling nag.
No, I'll be furnished something like myself;
And so farewell: for thy suit touching Knave's-acre, [100
When it is mine, 'tis thine.
MAR. I thank your worship.
[*Exit* WELLBORN.
How was [I] cozened in the calculation
Of this man's fortune! my master cozened too,
Whose pupil I am in the art of undoing men;
For that is our profession! Well, well, Master Wellborn, [110
You are of a sweet nature, and fit again to be cheated;
Which, if the Fates please, when you are possessed
Of the land and lady, you, sans question, shall be.
I'll presently[17] think of the means.
[*Walks along slowly, deep in his pleasant meditation.* [119

Enter OVERREACH, *speaking to a Servant off-stage.*

OVER. Sirrah, take my horse.
I'll walk to get me an appetite; 'tis but a mile,
And exercise will keep me from being pursy.[18]
<Ha! Marrall! is he conjuring? perhaps
The knave has wrought the prodigal to do [129
Some outrage on himself, and now he feels
Compunction in his conscience for't. No matter,
So it be done.> Marrall!
MAR. Sir.
OVER. How succeed we
In our plot on Wellborn?
MAR. Never better, sir.
OVER. Has he hanged or drowned himself?
MAR. No, sir, he lives— [140
Lives once more to be made a prey to you,
A greater prey than ever.
OVER. Art thou in thy wits?
If thou art, reveal this miracle, and briefly.
MAR. A lady, sir, is fallen in love with him.
OVER. With him? what lady?
MAR. The rich Lady Allworth. [150
OVER. Thou dolt! how dar'st thou speak this?
MAR. I speak truth;
And I do so but once a year, unless
It be to you, sir: we dined with her ladyship,
I thank his worship.
OVER. His worship!
MAR. As I live, sir, [159
I dined with him, at the great lady's table,
Simple as I stand here, and saw when she kissed him,
And would, at his request, have kissed me too;
But I was not so audacious as some youths are,
That[19] dare do anything, be it ne'er so absurd
And sad after performance. [170
OVER. Why, thou rascal!
To tell me these impossibilities!
Dine at her table? and kiss him? or thee?—

[15] manage. [16] As if. [17] now. [18] costive. [19] Q, "And."

Impudent varlet, have not I myself,
To whom great countesses' doors have oft flew open,
Ten times attempted, since her husband's death, [179
In vain, to see her, though I came a suitor?
And yet your good solicitorship and rogue Wellborn
Were brought into her presence, feasted with her!
But that I know thee a dog that cannot blush,
This most incredible lie would call up one
On thy buttermilk cheeks.
MAR. Shall I not trust my eyes, sir, [190
Or taste? I feel her good cheer in my belly.
OVER. You shall feel me, if you give not over, sirrah:
Recover your brains again, and be no more gulled
With a beggar's plot, assisted by the aids
Of serving-men and chambermaids (for, beyond these [199
Thou never saw'st a woman), or I'll quit you
From my employments.
MAR. Will you credit this yet?
On my confidence of their marriage, I offered Wellborn—
<I would give a crown now I durst say "his worship">—
My nag, and twenty pounds.
OVER. Did you so, idiot?
[*Strikes him down.* [210
Was this the way to work him to despair,
Or rather to cross me?
MAR. Will your worship kill me?
OVER. No, no; but drive the lying spirit out of you.
MAR. He's gone.
OVER. I have done then: now, forgetting
Your late imaginary feast and lady, [219
Know, my Lord Lovell dines with me tomorrow.
Be careful naught be wanting to receive him;
And bid my daughter's women trim her up;
Though they paint her, so she catch the lord, I'll thank them:
There's a piece for my late blows.
MAR. <I must yet suffer:
But there may be a time—> [230
OVER. Do you grumble?
MAR. No, sir.

ACT THREE

SCENE I

The next morning LORD LOVELL, *accompanied by* ALLWORTH *and others of his retainers, is on the way to the house of* OVERREACH, *where he is to dine.* SIR GILES *hopes to capture him as his son-in-law; but* ALLWORTH *has confided to his lordship that he is in love with* MARGARET, *and* LORD LOVELL *is an honorable and well-intentioned gentleman. The party is riding, but all have dis-* [10
mounted, and the horses are being led.

LOV. Walk the horses down the hill: something in private
I must impart to Allworth. [*Exeunt Servants, with the horses.*
ALL. Oh, my lord,
What sacrifice of reverence, duty, watching,
Although I could put off the use of sleep,
And ever wait on your commands [to] serve 'em; [21
What dangers, though in ne'er so horrid shapes,
Nay, death itself, though I should run to meet it,
Can I, and with a thankful willingness suffer!
But still the retribution will fall short
Of your bounties showered upon me.
LOV. Loving youth, [30
Till what I purpose be put into act,
Do not o'erprize it; since you have trusted me
With your soul's nearest, nay, her dearest, secret,
Rest confident 'tis in a cabinet locked
Treachery shall never open. I have found you
(For so much to your face I must profess,
Howe'er you guard your modesty with a blush for't) [41

More zealous in your love and service to me
Than I have been in my rewards.
ALL. Still great ones,
Above my merit.
LOV. Such your gratitude calls 'em;
Nor am I of that harsh and rugged temper,
As some great men are taxed with, who imagine [51
They part from the respect due to their honors
If they use not all such as follow 'em,
Without distinction of their births, like slaves.
I am not so conditioned: I can make
A fitting difference between my footboy
And a gentleman by want compelled to serve me. [60
ALL. 'Tis thankfully acknowledged; you have been
More like a father to me than a master:
Pray you, pardon the comparison.
LOV. I allow it;
And, to give you assurance I am pleased in't,
My carriage and demeanor to your mistress, [69
Fair Margaret, shall truly witness for me
I can command my passions.
ALL. 'Tis a conquest
Few lords can boast of when they are tempted.—Oh!
LOV. Why do you sigh? can you be doubtful of me?
By that fair name I in the wars have purchased,
And all my actions, hitherto untainted [79
I will not be more true to mine own honor
Than to my Allworth!
ALL. As you are the brave Lord Lovell,
Your bare word only given is an assurance
Of more validity and weight to me
Than all the oaths, bound up with imprecations, [89
Which, when they would deceive, most courtiers practise;
Yet, being a man (for, sure, to style you more
Would relish of gross flattery), I am forced,
Against my confidence of your worth and virtues,
To doubt, nay, more, to fear.
LOV. So young, and jealous! [99
ALL. Were you to encounter with a single foe,
The victory were certain; but to stand
The charge of two such potent enemies,
At once assaulting you, as wealth and beauty,
And those, too, seconded with power, is odds
Too great for Hercules.
LOV. Speak your doubts and fears
(Since you will nourish them) in plainer language, [111
That I may understand them.
ALL. What's your will,
Though I lend arms against myself (provided
They may advantage you), must be obeyed.
My much-loved lord, were Margaret only fair, [119
The cannon of her more than earthly form,
Though mounted high, commanding all beneath it,
And rammed with bullets of her sparkling eyes,
Of all the bulwarks that defend your senses
Could batter none[1] but that which guards your sight. [129
But, when the well-tuned accents of her tongue
Make music to you, and with numerous sounds
Assault your hearing (such as Ulysses, if he[2]
Now lived again, howe'er he stood the Sirens,
Could not resist), the combat must grow doubtful [139
Between your reason and rebellious passions.

[1] Q, "more." [2] Q, "if Ulysses."

Add this too; when you feel her touch, and breath
Like a soft western wind when it glides o'er
Arabia, creating gums and spices,
And, in the van, the nectar of her lips,
Which you must taste, bring the battalia on,
Well armed, and strongly lined[3] with her discourse,
And knowing manners, to give entertainment;
Hippolytus himself would leave Diana,
To follow such a Venus.

LOV. Love hath made you
Poetical, Allworth.

ALL. Grant all these beat off,
Which, if it be in man to do, you'll do it,
Mammon, in Sir Giles Overreach, steps in
With heaps of ill-got gold, and so much land,
To make her more remarkable, as would tire
A falcon's wings in one day to fly over.
O my good lord! these powerful aids, which would
Make a misshapen negro beautiful
(Yet are but ornaments to give her lustre,
That in herself is all perfection), must
Prevail for her: I here release your trust;
'Tis happiness enough for me to serve you
And sometimes, with chaste eyes, to look upon her.

LOV. Why, shall I swear?

ALL. Oh, by no means, my lord;
And wrong not so your judgment to the world
As from your fond indulgence to a boy,
Your page, your servant, to refuse a blessing
Divers great men are rivals for.

LOV. Suspend
Your judgment till the trial. How far is it
To Overreach' house?

ALL. At the most, some half-hour's riding;
You'll soon be there.

LOV. And you the sooner freed
From your jealous fears.

ALL. O that I durst but hope it!

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

We are in OVERREACH'S *house a few minutes later.* SIR GILES *is making the most elaborate and sumptuous preparations for the entertainment of* LORD LOVELL. *He is talking to his henchmen,* GREEDY *and* MARRALL.

OVER. Spare for no cost; let my dressers crack with the weight
Of curious viands.

GRE. "Store indeed's no sore," sir.

OVER. That proverb fits your stomach, Master Greedy.—
And let no plate be seen but what's pure gold,
Or such whose workmanship exceeds the matter
That it is made of; let my choicest linen
Perfume the room, and, when we wash, the water,
With precious powders mixed, so please my lord,
That he may with envy wish to bathe so ever.

MAR. 'Twill be very chargeable.[4]

OVER. Avaunt, you drudge!
Now all my labored ends are at the stake,
Is't a time to think of thrift? Call in my daughter.— [*Exit* MARRALL.
And, Master Justice, since you love choice dishes,
And plenty of them—

GRE. As I do, indeed, sir,
Almost as much as to give thanks for them.

OVER. I do confer that providence,[5] with my power
Of absolute command to have abundance,
To your best care.

GRE. I'll punctually discharge it,
And give the best directions. Now am I
In mine own conceit, a monarch; at the least,
Arch-president of the boiled, the roast, the baked;

[3] strengthened.

[4] expensive.

[5] management.

For which I will eat often, and give thanks
When my belly's braced up like a drum; and that's pure justice. [*Exit.*
OVER. I[t] must be so: should the foolish girl prove modest, [50
She may spoil all; she had it not from me,
But from her mother; I was ever forward,
As she must be; and therefore I'll prepare her.

Enter MARGARET *with Waiting-women.*

Alone—and let your women wait without. [*Exeunt the Waiting-women.*
MAR. Your pleasure, sir? [60
OVER. Ha! this is a neat dressing;
These orient pearls and diamonds well placed too!
The gown affects me not; [6] it should have been
Embroidered o'er and o'er with flowers of gold;
But these rich jewels and quaint fashion help it. [69
And how below? since oft the wanton eye,
The face observed, descends unto the foot,
Which, being well proportioned, as yours is,
Invites as much as perfect white and red,
Though without art. How like you your new woman,
The Lady Downfallen?
MAR. Well, for a companion; [80
Not as a servant.
OVER. Is she humble, Meg,
And careful too, her ladyship forgotten?
MAR. I pity her fortune.
OVER. Pity her? trample on her!
I took her up in an old tamin gown
(Even starved for want of twopenny chops), to serve thee,
And, if I understand she but repines [89
To do thee any duty, though ne'er so servile,
I'll pack her to her knight, where I have lodged him,

[6] does not please me.

Into the Counter,[7] and there let them howl together.
MAR. You know your own ways; but, for me, I blush
When I command her, that was once attended
With persons not inferior to myself [100
In birth.
OVER. In birth! why, art thou not my daughter,
The blest child of my industry and wealth?
Why, foolish girl, was't not to make thee great
That I have run, and still pursue, those ways [109
That hale down curses on me, which I mind not?
Part with these humble thoughts, and apt thyself
To the noble state I labor to advance thee;
Or, by my hopes to see thee honorable,
I will adopt a stranger to [8] my heir,
And throw thee from my care: do not provoke me. [119
MAR. I will not, sir; mould me which way you please.

Re-enter GREEDY.

OVER. How! interrupted!
GRE. 'Tis matter of importance.
The cook, sir, is self-willed, and will not learn
From my experience: there's a fawn brought in, sir,
And, for my life, I cannot make him roast it [130
With a Norfolk dumpling in the belly of it;
And, sir, we wise men know, without the dumpling
'Tis not worth threepence.
OVER. Would it were whole in thy belly,
To stuff it out! cook it any way; prithee, leave me. [139
GRE. Without order for the dumpling?
OVER. Let it be dumpled
Which way thou wilt; or, tell him, I will scald him

[7] The debtors' prison. [8] as.

In his own cauldron.
GRE. I had lost my stomach,[9]
Had I lost my mistress dumpling; I'll give thanks for't. [*Exit.*
OVER. But to our business, Meg; you have heard who dines here?
MAR. I have, sir.
OVER. 'Tis an honorable man;
A lord, Meg, and commands a regiment
Of soldiers, and, what's rare, is one himself,
A bold and understanding one; and to be
A lord and a good leader, in one volume,
Is granted unto few but such as rise up
The kingdom's glory.

Re-enter GREEDY.

GRE. I'll resign my office,
If I be not better obeyed.
OVER. 'Slight, art thou frantic?
GRE. Frantic! 'twould make me frantic and stark mad,
Were I not a justice of peace and quorum too,
Which this rebellious cook cares not a straw for.
There are a dozen of woodcocks—
OVER. Make thyself
Thirteen, the baker's dozen.
GRE. I am contented,
So they may be dressed to my mind; he has found out
A new device for sauce, and will not dish them
With toasts and butter. My father was a tailor,
And my name, though a justice, Greedy Woodcock;
And, ere I'll see my lineage so abused,
I'll give up my commission.
OVER., *calling*. Cook! Rogue, obey him!
—I have given the word, pray you now remove yourself
To a collar of brawn, and trouble me no further.
GRE. I will, and meditate what to eat at dinner. [*Exit.*
OVER. And, as I said, Meg, when this gull disturbed us,
This honorable lord, this colonel,
I would have thy husband.

[9] Both courage and appetite.

MAR. There's too much disparity
Between his quality and mine to hope it.
OVER. I more than hope't, and doubt not to effect it.
Be thou no enemy to thyself; my wealth
Shall weigh his titles down, and make you equals.
Now for the means to assure him thine, observe me:
Remember he's a courtier, and a soldier,
And not to be trifled with; and, therefore, when
He comes to woo you, see you do not coy it:
This mincing modesty has spoiled many a match
By a first refusal, in vain after hoped for.
MAR. You'll have me, sir, preserve the distance that
Confines a virgin?
OVER. Virgin me no virgins!
I must have you lose that name, or you lose me.
I will have you private—start not—I say, private;
If thou art my true daughter, not a bastard,
Thou wilt venture alone with one man, though he came
Like Jupiter to Semele, and come off[10] too;
And therefore, when he kisses you, kiss close.
MAR. I have heard this is the strumpet's fashion, sir,
Which I must never learn.
OVER. Learn any thing,
And from any creature that may make thee great;
From the devil himself.
MAR. <This is but devilish doctrine!>
OVER. Or, if his blood grow hot, suppose he offer
Beyond this, do not you stay till it cool,
But meet his ardor; if a couch be near,
Sit down on't and invite him.
MAR. In your house,
Your own house, sir? for heaven's sake, what are you then?

[10] succeed.

Or what shall I be, sir?
OVER. Stand not on form;
Words are no substances.
MAR. Though you could dispense
With your own honor, cast aside religion,
The hopes of heaven, or fear of hell, excuse me:
In worldly policy, this is not the way
To make me his wife; his whore, I grant it may do.
My maiden honor so soon yielded up,
Nay, prostituted, cannot but assure him
I, that am light to him, will not hold weight
When I am[11] tempted by others; so, in judgment,
When to his lust I have given up my honor,
He must and will forsake me.
OVER. How! forsake thee?
Do I wear a sword for fashion? or is this arm
Shrunk up or withered? does there live a man
Of that large list I have encountered with
Can truly say I e'er gave inch of ground
Not purchased with his blood that did oppose me?
Forsake thee when the thing is done? he dares not.
Give me but proof he has enjoyed thy person,
Though all his captains, echoes to his will,
Stood armed by his side to justify the wrong,
And he himself in the head of his bold troop,
Spite of his lordship and his colonelship
Or the judge's favor, I will make him render
A bloody and a strict account, and force him,
By marrying thee, to cure thy wounded honor!
I have said it.

Re-enter MARRALL.

MARR. Sir, the man of honor's come,
Newly alighted.
OVER. In, without reply;
And do as I command, or thou art lost.
[*Exit* MARGARET.
Is the loud music I gave order for
Ready to receive him?
MAR. 'Tis, sir.
OVER. Let 'em sound
A princely welcome. [*Exit* MARRALL.]
Roughness awhile leave me;
For fawning now, a stranger to my nature,
Must make way for me.

Loud music. Enter LORD LOVELL, GREEDY, ALLWORTH, *and* MARRALL.

LOV. Sir, you meet your trouble.
OVER., *obsequiously*. What you are pleased to style so is an honor
Above my worth and fortunes.
ALL. <Strange, so humble!>
OVER. A justice of peace, my lord.
[*Presents* GREEDY *to him.*
LOV. Your hand, good sir.
GRE. <This is a lord, and some think this a favor;
But I had rather have my hand in my dumpling.>
OVER. Room for my lord.
LOV. I miss, sir, your fair daughter
To crown my welcome.
OVER. May it please my lord
To taste a glass of Greek wine first, and suddenly[12]
She shall attend my lord.
LOV. You'll be obeyed, sir.
[*Exeunt all but* OVERREACH.
OVER. 'Tis to my wish: as soon as come, ask for her!
[*Calling.*] Why, Meg! Meg Overreach.—

Re-enter MARGARET.

How! tears in your eyes!
Hah! dry 'em quickly, or I'll dig 'em out.
Is this a time to whimper? meet that greatness
That flies into thy bosom, think what 'tis
For me to say, "My honorable daughter";
And thou, when I stand bare, to say, "Put on";

[11] "he is" in the original.

[12] at once.

Or "Father, you forget yourself." No more:
But be instructed, or expect—he comes.—

Re-enter LORD LOVELL, GREEDY, ALLWORTH, *and* MARRALL.

A black-browed girl, my lord. [LORD LOVELL *kisses* MARGARET.
LOV. As I live, a rare one.
ALL. <He's ta'en already: I am lost.>
OVER. <That kiss [350
Came twanging off; I like it.> Quit the room. [*Exeunt all but* OVERREACH, LOVELL, *and* MARGARET.
A little bashful, my good lord; but you,
I hope, will teach her boldness.
LOV. I am happy
In such a scholar; but—
OVER. I am past learning,
And therefore leave you to yourselves.—
[*To* MARGARET.] <Remember.>
[*Exit.* [361
LOV. You see, fair lady, your father is solicitous
To have you change the barren name of virgin
Into a hopeful wife.
MAR. His haste, my lord,
Holds no power o'er my will.
LOV. But o'er your duty. [369
MAR. Which, forced too much, may break.
LOV. Bend rather, sweetest:
Think of your years.
MAR. Too few to match with yours;
And choicest fruits, too soon plucked, rot and wither.
LOV. Do you think I am old?
MAR. I am sure I am too young.
LOV. I can advance you.
MAR. To a hill of sorrow, [380
Where every hour I may expect to fall,
But never hope firm footing. You are noble,
I of a low descent, however rich;
And tissues matched with scarlet[13] suit but ill.
Oh, my good lord, I could say more, but that
I dare not trust these walls.
LOV. Pray you, trust my ear then. [390

[13] silks matched with woollens.

MARGARET *drops her voice to a whisper; and it is at this juncture that* OVERREACH, *who is most happily free from every instinct of a gentleman, enters at the back silently, for the purpose of eavesdropping.*

OVER. <Close at it! whispering! this is excellent!
And, by their postures, a consent on both parts.> [400

Re-enter GREEDY *behind. He speaks in a thick whisper.*

GRE. <Sir Giles, Sir Giles!
OVER. The great fiend stop that clapper!
GRE. It must ring out, sir, when my belly rings noon:
The baked-meats are run out, the roast turned powder.
OVER. I shall powder you— [410
GRE. Beat me to dust, I care not;
In such a cause as this, I'll die a martyr.
OVER. Marry, and shall, you barathrum[14] of the shambles! [*Strikes him.*
GRE. How! strike a justice of peace! 'tis petty treason,
Edwardi quinto: but that you are my friend, [419
I would[15] commit you without bail or mainprize.[16]
OVER. Leave your bawling, sir, or I shall commit you
Where you shall not dine to-day: disturb my lord,
When he is in discourse?
GRE. Is't a time to talk
When we should be munching?>
LOV. Hah! I heard some noise. [429
OVER. <Mum, villain; vanish! shall we break a bargain
Almost made up?> [*Thrusts* GREEDY *off.*
LOV. <Lady, I understand you,
And rest most happy in your choice, believe it;
I'll be a careful pilot to direct
Your yet uncertain bark to a port of safety.

[14] devouring gulf.
[15] Q, "could," [16] surety.

MAR. So shall your honor save two lives, and bind us [440
Your slaves for ever.
LOV. I am in the act rewarded,
Since it is good; howe'er, you must put on
An amorous carriage towards me to delude
Your subtle father.
MAR. I am prone to[17] that.
LOV. Now break we off our conference.> Sir Giles! [450
Where is Sir Giles? [OVERREACH *comes forward.*

Re-enter ALLWORTH, MARRALL, *and* GREEDY.

OVER. My noble lord; and how
Does your lordship find her?
LOV. Apt, Sir Giles, and coming;[18]
And I like her the better.
OVER. So do I too. [459
LOV. Yet, should we take forts at the first assault,
'Twere poor in the defendant; I must confirm her
With a love-letter or two, which I must have
Delivered by my page, and you give way to't.
OVER. With all my soul. <A towardly gentleman!> [469
Your hand, good Master Allworth; know my house
Is ever open to you.
ALL. <'Twas shut till now.>
OVER., *to* MARGARET. <Well done, well done, my honorable daughter!
Thou'rt so already.> Know this gentle youth,
And cherish him, my honorable daughter.
MARG. I shall, with my best care.
[*Noise within, as of a coach.* [480
OVER. A coach!
GRE. More stops
Before we go to dinner! Oh, my guts!

Enter LADY ALLWORTH *and* WELLBORN.

LADY ALL., *to* WELLBORN. <If I find welcome,

[17] ready to do. [18] complaisant.

You share in it; if not, I'll back again,
Now I know your ends; for I come armed for all
Can be objected.> [490
LOV. <How! the Lady Allworth?
OVER. And thus attended!>
[LOVELL *kisses* LADY ALLWORTH; LADY ALLWORTH *kisses* MARGARET.
MARR., *thinking this a good opportunity to cast* SIR GILES' *words back at him.* <No, "I am a dolt!
The spirit of lies hath entered me!"
OVER. Peace, Patch; [499
'Tis more than wonder! an astonishment
That does possess me wholly!>
LOV. Noble lady,
This is a favor, to prevent[19] my visit,
The service of my life can never equal.
LADY ALL. My lord, I laid wait for you, and much hoped
You would have made my poor house your first inn;
And therefore, doubting that you might forget me, [510
Or too long dwell here, having such ample cause,
In this unequalled beauty, for your stay,
And fearing to trust any but myself
With the relation of my service to you,
I borrowed so much from my long restraint
And took the air in person to invite you.
LOV. Your bounties are so great, they rob me, madam, [520
Of words to give you thanks.
LADY ALL. Good Sir Giles Overreach.
[*Kisses him.*
—How dost thou, Marrall? liked you my meat so ill
You'll dine no more with me?
GRE. I will, when you please,
An it like your ladyship.
LADY ALL. When you please, Master Greedy; [530
If meat can do it, you shall be satisfied.—
And now, my lord, pray take into your knowledge
This gentleman [*presenting* WELLBORN]; howe'er his outside's coarse,
His inward linings are as fine and fair

[19] anticipate.

As any man's; wonder not I speak at large: [20]
And, howsoe'er his humor carries him [539
To be thus accoutred, or what taint soever,
For his wild life, hath stuck upon his fame,
He may, ere long, with boldness, rank himself
With some that have contemned him.—Sir Giles Overreach,
If I am welcome, bid him so.
OVER. My nephew! [549
He has been too long a stranger.—Faith, you have;
Pray let it be mended. [LOVELL *confers aside with* WELLBORN.
MAR., *to* OVERREACH. <Why, sir, what do you mean?
This is "rogue Wellborn, monster, prodigy,
That should hang or drown himself"; no man of worship,
Much less your nephew. [560
OVER. Well, sirrah, we shall reckon
For this hereafter.>
MAR. <I'll not lose my jeer,
Though I be beaten dead for't.>
WELL. <Let my silence plead
In my excuse, my lord, till better leisure
Offer itself to hear a full relation
Of my poor fortunes.
LOV. I would hear, and help 'em.>
OVER. Your dinner waits you. [570
LOV. Pray you lead; we follow.
LADY ALL. Nay, you are my guest; come, dear Master Wellborn.
[*Exeunt all but* GREEDY.
GRE. "Dear Master Wellborn"! So she said: Heaven! Heaven!
If my belly would give me leave, I could ruminate
All day on this: I have granted twenty warrants [580
To have him committed, from all prisons in the shire,
To Nottingham gaol; and now, "Dear Master Wellborn"!
And, "My good nephew"!—but I play the fool
To stand here prating, and forget my dinner.

Re-enter MARRALL.

Are they set, Marrall? [590
MAR. Long since; pray you a word, sir.
GRE. No wording now.
MAR. In troth, I must; my master,
Knowing you are his good friend, makes bold with you,
And does entreat you, more guests being come in
Than he expected, especially his nephew,
The table being full too, you would excuse him, [601
And sup with him on the cold meat.
GRE. How! no dinner,
After all my care?
MAR. 'Tis but a penance for
A meal; besides, you broke your fast.
GRE. That was
But a bit to stay my stomach: a man in commission
Give place to a tatterdemalion! [610
MAR. No bug words,[21] sir;
Should his worship hear you—
GRE. Lose my dumpling too,
And buttered toasts, and woodcocks!
MAR. Come, have patience.
If you will dispense a little with your worship,[22]
And sit with the waiting-women, you'll have dumpling,
Woodcock, and buttered toasts too. [620
GRE. This revives me:
I will gorge there sufficiently.
MAR. This is the way, sir.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

OVERREACH *is so delighted with the prospects of the success of his plot that he cannot contain himself. He has quitted the dinner table to be by himself, to indulge his sense of enjoyment.*

OVER. She's caught! O women! she neglects my lord,
And all her compliments applied to Wellborn! [9

[20] freely.
[21] threats.
[22] sense of importance.

The garments of her widowhood laid by,
She now appears as glorious as the spring;
Her eyes fixed on him, in the wine she drinks,
He being her pledge, she sends him burning kisses,
And sits on thorns till she be private with him.
She leaves my meat to feed upon his looks;
And, if in our discourse he be but named,
From her a deep sigh follows. But why grieve I
At this? it makes for me; if she prove his,
All that is hers is mine, as I will work him.

Enter MARRALL.

MAR. Sir, the whole board is troubled at your rising.
OVER. No matter, I'll excuse it: prithee, Marrall,
Watch an occasion to invite my nephew
To speak with me in private.
MAR. Who? "the rogue
The lady scorned to look on"?
OVER. You are a wag.

Enter LADY ALLWORTH *and* WELLBORN.

MAR. <See, sir, she's come, and cannot be without him.>
LADY ALL. With your favor, sir, after a plenteous dinner,
I shall make bold to walk a turn or two
In your rare garden.
OVER. There's an arbor too,
If your ladyship please to use it.
LADY ALL. Come, Master Wellborn.
[*Exeunt* LADY ALLWORTH *and* WELLBORN.
OVER. Grosser and grosser! now I believe the poet
Feigned not, but was historical, when he wrote
Pasiphaë was enamored of a bull:
This lady's lust's more monstrous.

Enter LORD LOVELL, MARGARET, *and the rest.*

My good lord,
Excuse my manners.
LOV. There needs none, Sir Giles,
I may ere long say "father," when it pleases
My dearest mistress to give warrant to it.
OVER. She shall seal to it, my lord, and make me happy.

Re-enter WELLBORN *and* LADY ALLWORTH.

MARR. My lady is returned.
LADY ALL. Provide my coach;
I'll instantly away.—My thanks, Sir Giles,
For my entertainment.
OVER. 'Tis your nobleness
To think it such.
LADY ALL. I must do you a further wrong
In taking away your honorable guest.
LOV. I wait on you, madam.—Farewell, good Sir Giles.
LADY ALL. Good Mistress Margaret!—Nay, come, Master Wellborn,
I must not leave you behind; in sooth, I must not.
OVER. Rob me not, madam, of all joys at once;
Let my nephew stay behind: he shall have my coach,
And, after some small conference between us,
Soon overtake your ladyship.
LADY ALL. Stay not long, sir.
LOV. This parting kiss. [*Kisses* MARGARET.] You shall every day hear from me
By my faithful page.
ALL. 'Tis a service I am proud of.
[*Exeunt* LORD LOVELL, LADY ALLWORTH, ALLWORTH, *and* MARRALL.
OVER. Daughter, to your chamber.—
[*Exit* MARGARET.] You may wonder, nephew,
After so long an enmity between us,
I should desire your friendship.
WELL. So I do, sir;
'Tis strange to me.
OVER. But I'll make it no wonder;
And, what is more, unfold my nature to you.

We worldly men, when we see friends and kinsmen
Past hope sunk in their fortunes, lend no hand
To lift them up, but rather set our feet
Upon their heads, to press them to the bottom;
As, I must yield,[23] with you I practised it;
But, now I see you in a way to rise,
I can and will assist you; this rich lady
(And I am glad of't) is enamored of you;
'Tis too apparent, nephew.
WELL. No such thing:
Compassion rather, sir.
OVER. Well, in a word,
Because your stay is short, I'll have you seen
No more in this base shape; nor shall she say,
She married you like a beggar, or in debt.
WELL. <He'll run into the noose, and save my labor.>
OVER. You have a trunk of rich clothes, not far hence,
In pawn; I will redeem them; and, that no clamor
May taint your credit for your petty debts,
You shall have a thousand pounds to cut 'em off,
And go a free man to the wealthy lady.
WELL. This done, sir, out of love, and no ends else—
OVER. As it is, nephew.
WELL. Binds me still[24] your servant.
OVER. No compliments; you are stayed for: ere you have supped
You shall hear from me.—[*Calling.*] My coach, knaves, for my nephew.—
To-morrow I will visit you.
WELL. Here's an uncle
In a man's extremes! how much they do belie you
That say you are hard-hearted!
OVER. My deeds, nephew,
Shall speak my love; what men report I weigh not. [*Exeunt.*

[23] confess. [24] ever.

ACT FOUR

SCENE I

Early the next morning, in LADY ALLWORTH'S *house,* LORD LOVELL, *in furtherance of the plan he has concocted with* ALLWORTH, *discharges the latter from his service.*

LOV. 'Tis well; give me my cloak. I now discharge you
From further service: mind your own affairs;
I hope they will prove successful.
ALL. What is blest
With your good wish, my lord, cannot but prosper.
Let aftertimes report, and to your honor,
How much I stand engaged; for I want language
To speak my debt; yet, if a tear or two
Of joy for your much goodness can supply
My tongue's defects, I could—
LOV. Nay, do not melt:
This ceremonial thanks to me's superfluous.
OVER., *within.* Is my lord stirring?
LOV. 'Tis he! Oh, here's your letter: let him in.

Enter OVERREACH, GREEDY, *and* MARRALL.

OVER. A good day to my lord!
LOV. You are an early riser, Sir Giles.
OVER. And reason, to attend your lordship.
LOV. And you, too, Master Greedy, up so soon!
GRE. In troth, my lord, after the sun is up
I cannot sleep, for I have a foolish stomach
That croaks for breakfast. With your lordship's favor,
I have a serious question to demand
Of my worthy friend Sir Giles.
LOV. Pray you use your pleasure.
GRE. How far, Sir Giles, and pray you answer me
Upon your credit, hold you it to be
From your manor-house to this of my Lady Allworth's?
OVER. Why, some four mile.

GRE. How! four mile, good Sir Giles?
Upon your reputatiön, think better;
For, if you do abate but one half-quarter
Of five, you do yourself the greatest wrong
That can be in the world; for four miles riding
Could not have raised so huge an appetite
As I feel gnawing on me.
MAR. Whether you ride,
Or go afoot, you are that way still provided,
An it please your worship.
OVER. How now, sirrah? prating
Before my lord? no deference? Go to my nephew,
See all his debts discharged, and help his worship
To fit on his rich suit.
MAR. <I may fit you too.
Tossed like a dog still!> [*Exit.*
LOV. I have writ this morning
A few lines to my mistress, your fair daughter.
OVER. 'Twill fire her, for she's wholly yours already.—
Sweet Master Allworth, take my ring; 'twill carry you
To her presence, I dare warrant you; and there plead
For my good lord, if you shall find occasion.
That done, pray ride to Nottingham, get a license,
Still by this token. I'll have it dispatched,
And suddenly, my lord, that I may say,
"My honorable," nay, "right honorable daughter."
GRE. Take my advice, young gentleman, get your breakfast;
'Tis unwholesome to ride fasting. I'll eat with you,
And eat to purpose.
OVER. Some Fury's in that gut!
Hungry again? did you not devour, this morning,
A shield of brawn and a barrel of Colchester oysters?
GRE. Why, that was, sir, only to scour my stomach,
A kind of a preparative. Come, gentleman,
I will not have you feed like the hangman of Flushing,
Alone, while I am here.
LOV. Haste your return.
ALL. I will not fail, my lord.
GRE. Nor I, to line
My Christmas coffer. [*Exeunt* GREEDY *and* ALLWORTH.
OVER. To my wish: we are private.
I come not to make offer with my daughter
A certain portion; that were poor and trivial:
In one word, I pronounce all that is mine,
In lands or leases, ready coin or goods,
With her, my lord, comes to you; nor shall you have
One motive to induce you to believe
I live too long, since every year I'll add
Something unto the heap, which shall be yours too.
LOV. You are a right kind father.
OVER. You shall have reason
To think me such. How do you like this seat?[1]
It is well wooded and well watered; the acres
Fertile and rich; would it not serve for change,
To entertain your friends in a summer progress?
What thinks my noble lord?
LOV. 'Tis a wholesome air,
And well-built pile; and she that's mistress of it,
Worthy the large revénue.
OVER. She the mistress!
It may be so for a time; but, let my lord
Say only that he likes it and would have it,
I say, ere long 'tis his.
LOV. Impossible!
OVER. You do conclude too fast, not knowing me,

[1] residence.

Nor the engines[2] that I work by. 'Tis not alone
The Lady Allworth's lands, for those, [150 once Wellborn's
(As by her dotage on him I know they will be),
Shall soon be mine; but point out any man's
In all the shire, and say they lie convenient
And useful for your lordship, and, once more
I say aloud, they are yours. [160
Lov. I dare not own
What's by unjust and cruel means extorted;
My fame and credit are more dear to me
Than so to expose them to be censured by
The public voice.
Over. You run, my lord, no hazard.
Your reputatiön shall stand as fair,
In all good men's opiniöns, as now; [170
Nor can my actions, though condemned for ill,
Cast any foul aspersion upon yours.
For, though I do contemn report myself
As a mere sound, I still will be so tender
Of what concerns you in all points of honor
That the immaculate whiteness of your fame,
Nor your unquestionëd integrity, [180
Shall e'er be sullied with one taint or spot
That may take from your innocence and candor.[3]
All my ambition is to have my daughter
Right honorable, which my lord can make her;
And, might I live to dance upon my knee
A young Lord Lovell, born by her unto you, [189
I write nil ultra to my proudest hopes.
As for possessiöns and annual rents,
Equivalent to maintain you in the port[4]
Your noble birth and present state requires,
I do remove that burthen from your shoulders,
And take it on mine own: for, though I ruin
The country to supply your riotous waste, [200
The scourge of prodigals, want, shall never find you.
Lov. Are you not frighted with the imprecations
And curses of whole families, made wretched
By your sinister practices?
Over. Yes, as rocks are,
When foamy billows split themselves against [210
Their flinty ribs; or as the moon is moved,
When wolves, with hunger pined,[5] howl at her brightness.
I am of a solid temper, and, like these,
Steer on a constant course: with mine own sword,
If called into the field, I can make that right
Which fearful enemies murmured at as wrong. [221
Now, for these other piddling complaints,
Breathed out in bitterness; as when they call me
Extortioner, tyrant, cormorant, or intruder
On my poor neighbor's right, or grand incloser,
Of what was common, to my private use;
Nay, when my ears are pierced with [230 widows' cries,
And undone orphans wash with tears my threshold,
I only think what 'tis to have my daughter
Right honorable; and 'tis a powerful charm,
Makes me insensible of remorse, or pity,
Or the least sting of conscience.
Lov. I admire[6] [240
The toughness of your nature.
Over. 'Tis for you,
My lord, and for my daughter I am marble;
Nay, more: if you will have my character
In little, I enjoy more true delight

[2] devices.
[3] freedom from taint.
[4] grandeur.
[5] famished.
[6] wonder at.

In my arrival to my wealth these dark
And crooked ways than you shall e'er take pleasure
In spending what my industry hath compassed.
My haste commands me hence; in one word, therefore,
Is it a match?

Lov. I hope that is past doubt now.

Over. Then rest secure; not the hate of all mankind here,
Nor fear of what can fall on me hereafter,
Shall make me study aught but your advancement
One story higher: an earl, if gold can do it.
Dispute not my religion, nor my faith;
Though I am borne thus headlong by my will,
You may make choice of what belief you please:
To me they are equal; so, my lord, good morrow. [*Exit.*

Lov. He's gone. I wonder how the earth can bear
Such a portent! I, that have lived a soldier,
And stood the enemy's violent charge undaunted,
To hear this blasphemous beast, am bathed all over
In a cold sweat; yet, like a mountain, he
(Confirmed in atheistical assertions)
Is no more shaken than Olympus is
When angry Boreas loads his double head[7]
With sudden drifts of snow.

Enter Lady Allworth, Waiting-woman *and* Amble.

Lady All. Save you, my lord!
Disturb I not your privacy?

Lov. No, good madam;
For your own sake I am glad you came no sooner,
Since this bold, bad man, Sir Giles Overreach,
Made such a plain discovery of himself
And read this morning such a devilish matins
That I should think it a sin next to his
But to repeat it.

Lady All. I ne'er pressed, my lord,
On others' privacies; yet, against my will,
Walking, for health sake, in the gallery
Adjoining to your lodgings, I was made
(So vehement and loud he was) partaker
Of his tempting offers.

Lov. Please you to command
Your servants hence, and I shall gladly hear
Your wiser counsel.

Lady All. 'Tis, my lord, a woman's,
But true and hearty. [*To the Servants.*] Wait in the next room,
But be within call; yet not so near to force me
To whisper my intents.

Amb. We are taught better
By you, good madam.

Wom. And well know our distance.

Lady All. Do so, and talk not: 'twill become your breeding. [*Exeunt* Amble *and* Woman.
Now, my good lord: if I may use my freedom,
As to an honored friend—

Lov. You lessen else
Your favor to me.

Lady All. I dare then say thus:
As you are noble, howe'er common men
Make sordid wealth the object and sole end
Of their industrious aims, 'twill not agree
With those of eminent blood, who are engaged
More to prefer[8] their honors than to increase
The state left to them by their ancestors,
To study large additions to their fortunes,
And quite neglect their births; though I must grant
Riches, well got, to be a useful servant,
But a bad master.

Lov. Madam, 'tis confessed;

[7] But it was Parnassus, not Olympus, that had a "double head."

[8] advance.

But what infer you from it?
LADY ALL. This, my lord:
That, as all wrongs, though thrust into one scale,
Slide of themselves off when right fills the other,
And cannot bide the trial, so all wealth,
I mean if ill-acquired, cemented to honor,
By virtuous ways achieved and bravely purchased,
Is but as rubbish poured into a river
(Howe'er intended to make good the bank),
Rendering the water, that was pure before,
Polluted and unwholesome. I allow
The heir of Sir Giles Overreach, Margaret,
A maid well qualified and the richest match
Our north part can make boast of; yet she cannot,
With all that she brings with her, fill their mouths[9]
That never will forget who was her father;
Or that my husband Allworth's lands, and Wellborn's
(How wrung from both needs now no repetition),
Were reäl motives that more worked your lordship
To join your families than her form and virtues.
You may conceive the rest.
LOV. I do, sweet madam,
And long since have considered it. I know,
The sum of all that makes a just man happy
Consists in the well choosing of his wife;
And there, well to discharge it, does require
Equality of years, of birth, of fortune;
For beauty, being poor and not cried up
By birth or wealth, can truly mix with neither;
And wealth, where there's such difference in years
And fair descent, must make the yoke uneasy.
But I come nearer.
LADY ALL. Pray you do, my lord.
LOV. Were Overreach' states thrice centupled, his daughter
Millions of degrees much fairer than she is,
Howe'er I might urge precedents to excuse me,
I would not so adulterate my blood
By marrying Margaret, and so leave my issue
Made up of several pieces, one part scarlet
And the other London blue.[10] In my own tomb
I will inter my name first.
LADY ALL. <I am glad to hear this.>
Why then, my lord, pretend you marriage to her?
Dissimulatiön but ties false knots
On that straight line by which you, hitherto,
Have measured all your actions.
LOV. I make answer,
And aptly, with a question: wherefore have you,
That, since your husband's death, have lived a strict
And chaste nun's life, on the sudden given yourself
To visits and entertainments? think you, madam,
'Tis not grown public conference[11] ? or the favors
Which you too prodigally have thrown on Wellborn,
Being too reserved before, incur not censure?
LADY ALL. I am innocent here; and, on my life, I swear
My ends are good.
LOV. On my soul, so are mine
To Margaret; but leave both to the event;
And, since this friendly privacy does serve
But as an offered means unto ourselves

[9] stop the gossip of those.
[10] the color of servants' uniforms.
[11] gossip.

To search each other farther, you having shown
Your care of me, I my respect to you,
Deny me not, but still in chaste words, madam,
An afternoon's discourse.
LADY ALL. So; I shall hear you. [450
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

TAPWELL *and* FROTH *are in front of their alehouse on the afternoon of the same day. They are in a great state of agitation, fearing revenge on the part of* WELLBORN *for their treatment of him.*

TAP. Undone, undone! this was your counsel, Froth.
FROTH. Mine? I defy thee: did not Master Marrall
(He has marred all, I am sure) strictly command us, [11
On pain of Sir Giles Overreach' displeasure,
To turn the gentleman out of doors?
TAP. 'Tis true;
But now he's his uncle's darling, and has got
Master Justice Greedy, since he filled his belly, [19
At his commandment, to do anything;
Woe, woe to us!
FROTH. He may prove merciful.
TAP. Troth, we do not deserve it at his hands.
Though he knew all the passages[12] of our house,
As the receiving of stolen goods, and bawdry,
When he was rogue Wellborn no man would believe him, [30
And then his information could not hurt us;
But, now he is right worshipful again,
Who dares but doubt his testimony? methinks,
I see thee, Froth, already in a cart,[13]
For a close[14] bawd, thine eyes even pelted out
With dirt and rotten eggs; and my hand hissing, [40
If I scape the halter, with the letter R[15]
Printed upon it.
FROTH. Would that were the worst!
That were but nine days' wonder: as for credit,
We have none to lose; but we shall lose the money
He owes us and his custom; there's the hell on't. [49
TAP. He has summoned all his creditors by the drum,
And they swarm about him like so many soldiers
On the pay day; and has found out such a new way
To pay his old debts as 'tis very likely
He shall be chronicled for it.
FROTH. He deserves it
More than ten pageants. But are you sure his worship [60
Comes this way to my lady's?
[*A cry within:* "Brave Master Wellborn!"
TAP. Yes.—I hear him.
FROTH. Be ready with your petition, and present it
To his good grace.

Enter WELLBORN, *in a rich habit, followed by* MARRALL, GREEDY, ORDER, FURNACE, *and* CREDITORS; TAPWELL, *kneeling, delivers his bill of debt.* [71

WELL. How's this! petitioned too?—
But note what miracles the payment of
A little trash, and a rich suit of clothes,
Can work upon these rascals! I shall be,
I think, Prince Wellborn.
MAR. When your worship's married,
You may be: I know what I hope to see you.
WELL. Then look thou for advancement. [81
MAR. To be known
Your worship's bailiff is the mark I shoot at.
WELL. And thou shalt hit it.
MAR. Pray you, sir, dispatch
These needy followers, and, for my admittance,[16]

[12] doings.
[13] carted (the bawd's punishment).
[14] secret.
[15] for "Rogue."
[16] *i.e.*, to your service.

Provided you'll defend me from Sir Giles
Whose service I am weary of, I'll say something
You shall give thanks for.
WELL. Fear me not Sir Giles.
[*Meanwhile* TAPWELL *and* FROTH *have been talking privately to* GREEDY.
GRE. <Who, Tapwell? I remember thy wife brought me,
Last new-year's tide, a couple of fat turkeys.
TAP. And shall do every Christmas, let your worship
But stand my friend now.
GRE. How! with Master Wellborn?
I can do anything with him on such terms.>
See you this honest couple? they are good souls
As ever drew out faucet. Have they not
A pair of honest faces?
WELL. I o'erheard you,
And the bribe he promised. You are cozened in them;
For, of[17] all the scum that grew rich by my riots,
This, for a most unthankful knave, and this,
For a base bawd and whore, have worst deserved me;
And therefore speak not for 'em: by your place
You are rather to do me justice; lend me your ear:
<Forget his turkeys, and call in his license,
And, at the next fair, I'll give you a yoke of oxen
Worth all his poultry.>
GRE. I am changed on the sudden
In my opinion! come near; nearer, rascal.
And, now I view him better, did you e'er see
One look so like an archknave? his very countenance,
Should an understanding judge but look upon him,
Would hang him, though he were innocent.
TAP. AND FROTH. Worshipful sir—
GRE. No, though the Great Turk came, instead of turkeys,
To beg my favor, I am inexorable.
Thou hast an ill name: besides thy musty ale,
That hath destroyed many of the king's liege people,
Thou never hadst in thy house, to stay men's stomachs,
A piece of Suffolk cheese or gammon of bacon,
Or any esculent, as the learned call it,
For their emolument, but sheer drink only;
For which gross fault I here do damn thy license,
Forbidding thee ever to tap or draw;
For, instantly, I will, in mine own person,
Command the constable to pull down thy sign,
And do it before I eat.
FROTH. No mercy?
GRE. Vanish!
If I show any, may my promised oxen gore me!
TAP. Unthankful knaves are ever so rewarded. [*Exeunt* GREEDY, TAPWELL, *and* FROTH *into the alehouse.*
WELL. Speak; what are you?
1 CRED. A decayed vintner, sir,
That might have thrived, but that your worship broke me
With trusting you with muskadine and eggs
And five pound suppers, with your after-drinkings,
When you lodged upon the Bankside.
WELL. I remember.
1 CRED. I have not been hasty, nor e'er laid[18] to arrest you;
And therefore, sir—
WELL. Thou art an honest fellow;
I'll set thee up again. [*To* MARRALL.] See his bill paid.—
What are you?
2 CRED. A tailor once, but now mere botcher.[19]

[17] Q, by.

[18] planned.

[19] patcher.

I gave you credit for a suit of clothes,
Which was all my stock, but, you failing in payment,
I was removed from the shopboard, and confined
Under a stall.
WELL. See him paid;—and botch no more.
2 CRED. I ask no interest, sir.
WELL. Such tailors need not;
If their bills are paid in one-and-twenty year,
They are seldom losers.—[*To* THIRD CREDITOR.] Oh, I know thy face;
Thou wert my surgeon: you must tell no tales;
Those days are done. I will pay you in private.
ORD. A royal gentleman!
FUR. Royal as an emperor!
He'll prove a brave master; my good lady knew
To choose a man.
WELL. See all men else discharged;
And, since old debts are cleared by a new way,
A little bounty will not misbecome me;
There's something, honest cook, for thy good breakfasts;
And this, [*to* ORDER] for your respect: take't, 'tis good gold,
And I able to spare it.
ORD. You are too munificent.
FUR. He was ever so.
WELL. Pray you, on before.
3 CRED. Heaven bless you!
MAR. At four o'clock; the rest know where to meet me. [*Exeunt* ORDER, FURNACE, *and* CREDITORS.
WELL. Now, Master Marrall, what's the weighty secret
You promised to impart?
MAR. Sir, time nor place
Allow me to relate each circumstance;
This only, in a word: I know Sir Giles
Will come upon you for security
For his thousand pounds, which you must not consent to.
As he grows in heat, as I am sure he will,
Be you but rough, and say he's in your debt
Ten times the sum, upon sale of your land;
I had a hand in't (I speak it to my shame),
When you were defeated [20] of it.
WELL. That's forgiven.
MAR. I shall deserve it: then urge him to produce
The deed in which you passed it over to him,
Which I know he'll have about him, to deliver
To the Lord Lovell, with many other writings
And present monies: I'll instruct you further,
As I wait on your worship: if I play not my prize [21]
To your full content, and your uncle's much vexation,
Hang up Jack Marrall.
WELL. I rely upon thee. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

ALLWORTH *has taken* LORD LOVELL'S *letter to* MARGARET *(the excuse for his visit).*

ALL. Whether to yield the first praise to my lord's
Unequalled temperance or your constant sweetness
That I yet live, my weak hands fastened on
Hope's anchor, spite of all storms of despair,
I yet rest doubtful.
MAR. Give it to Lord Lovell;
For what in him was bounty in me's duty.
I make but payment of a debt to which
My vows, in that high office [22] registered,
Are faithful witnesses.
ALL. 'Tis true, my dearest;
Yet, when I call to mind how many fair ones
Make wilful shipwreck of their faiths and oaths
To God and man, to fill the arms of greatness,
And you rise up [no] less than a glorious star,

[20] robbed. [21] part. [22] *i.e.*, heaven.

To the amazement of the world,—hold out
Against the stern authority of a father, [30
And spurn at honor, when it comes to court you—
I am so tender of your good, that faintly,
With your wrong, I can wish myself that right
You yet are pleased to do me.
MAR. Yet, and ever.
To me what's title, when content is wanting?
Or wealth, raked up together with much care, [41
And to be kept with more, when the heart pines
In being dispossessed of what it longs for,
Beyond the Indian mines? or the smooth brow
Of a pleased sire, that slaves me to his will,
And, so his ravenous humor may be feasted [50
By my obedience and he see me great,
Leaves to my soul nor faculties nor power
To make her own election?[23]
ALL. But the dangers
That follow the repulse—
MAR. To me they are nothing;
Let Allworth love, I cannot be unhappy.
Suppose the worst, that, in his rage, he kill me; [60
A tear or two, by you dropped on my hearse,
In sorrow for my fate, will call back life
So far as but to say that I die yours;
I then shall rest in peace; or, should he prove
So cruel, as one death would not suffice
His thirst of vengeance, but with lingering torments [69
In mind and body I must waste to air,
In poverty joined with banishment; so you share
In my afflictions, which I dare not wish you,
So high I prize you, I could undergo them
With such a patiënce as should look down
With scorn on his worst malice.

[23] choice.

ALL. Heaven avert
Such trials of your true affection to me!
Nor will it unto you, that are all mercy,
Show so much rigor: but, since we must run [82
Such desperate hazards, let us do our best
To steer between them.
MAR. Your lord's ours, and sure;
And, though but a young actor, second me
In doing to the life what he has plotted.

Enter OVERREACH *behind.*

The end may yet prove happy. Now, my Allworth— [92
ALL., *seeing her father.* <To your letter, and put on a seeming anger.>
MAR. I'll pay my lord all debts due to his title;
And, when with terms not taking from his honor
He does solicit me, I shall gladly hear him; [100
But, in this peremptory, nay, commanding way,
To appoint a meeting, and, without my knowledge,
A priest to tie the knot can ne'er be undone
Till death unloose it, is a confidence
In his lordship will deceive him.
ALL. I hope better,
Good lady. [110
MAR. Hope, sir, what you please: for me,
I must take a safe and secure course; I have
A father, and, without his full consent,
Though all lords of the land kneeled for my favor,
I can grant nothing.
OVER., *coming forward.* I like this obedience; [120
But whatsoe'er my lord writes must and shall be
Accepted and embraced.—Sweet Master Allworth,
You show yourself a true and faithful servant

To your good lord; he has a jewel of you.—
How! frowning, Meg? are these looks to receive
A messenger from my lord? what's this? give me it.
MAR. A piece of arrogant paper, like the inscriptions.
OVER., *reading*. "Fair mistress, from your servant learn, all joys
That we can hope for, if deferred, prove toys;
Therefore this instant, and in private, meet
A husband, that will gladly at your feet
Lay down his honors, tendering them to you
With all content, the church being paid her due."
—Is this the arrogant piece of paper? fool!
Will you still be one? in the name of madness, what
Could his good honor write more to content you?
Is there aught else to be wished, after these two,
That are already offered; marriage first,
And lawful pleasure after? what would you more?
MAR. Why, sir, I would be married like your daughter;
Not hurried away i' the night I know not whither,
Without all ceremony; no friends invited
To honor the solemnity.
ALL. An't please your honor
(For so before to-morrow I must style you),
My lord desires this privacy, in respect
His honorable kinsmen are afar off,
And his desires to have it done brook not
So long delay as to expect[24] their coming;
And yet he stands resolved, with all due pomp,
As running at the ring, plays, masks, and tilting,
To have his marriage at court celebrated,
When he has brought your honor up to London.

[24] await.

OVER. He tells you true; 'tis the fashion, on my knowledge;
Yet the good lord, to please your peevishness,
Must put it off, forsooth! and lose a night,
In which perhaps he might get two boys on thee.
Tempt me no further; if you do, this goad [*Points to his sword.*
Shall prick you to him.
MAR. I could be contented,
Were you but by, to do a father's part,
And give me in the church.
OVER. So my lord have you,
What do I care who gives you? since my lord
Does purpose to be private, I'll not cross him.
I know not, Master Allworth, how my lord
May be provided; and therefore there's a purse
Of gold; 'twill serve this night's expense; to-morrow
I'll furnish him with any sums. In the meantime,
Use my ring to my chaplain; he is beneficed
At my manor of Got'em, and called Parson Willdo.
'Tis no matter for a license, I'll bear him out in't.
MAR. With your favor, sir, what warrant is your ring?
He may suppose I got that twenty ways,
Without your knowledge; and then to be refused
Were such a stain upon me! If you pleased, sir,
Your presence would do better.
OVER. Still perverse!
I say again, I will not cross my lord;
Yet I'll prevent you[25] too.—[*Calling.*] Paper and ink there!
ALL. I can furnish you.
OVER. I thank you, I can write then. [*Writes.*
ALL. You may, if you please, put out the name of my lord,

[25] meet your objections.

In respect he comes disguised, and only write,
"Marry her to this gentleman."
OVER. Well advised.—
'Tis done; away.—[MARGARET *kneels.*]
My blessing, girl? thou hast it.
Nay, no reply, be gone.—Good Master Allworth,
This shall be the best night's work you ever made.
ALL. I hope so, sir.
OVER. Farewell! [*Exeunt* ALLWORTH *and* MARGARET.] Now all's cocksure:
Methinks I hear already knights and ladies
Say, "Sir Giles Overreach, how is it with
Your honorable daughter? has her honor
Slept well to-night?" or "Will her honor please
To accept this monkey, dog, or parroquit"
(This is state in ladies), "or my eldest son
To be her page, and wait upon her trencher?"
My ends, my ends are compassed. Then for Wellborn
And the lands; were he once married to the widow,
I have him here. I can scarce contain myself,
I am so full of joy, nay, joy all over.

ACT FIVE

SCENE I

It is still the same day; but we are back in LADY ALLWORTH'S *house. She and* LORD LOVELL *have explained to one another their several plots.*

LADY ALL. By this you know how strong the motives were
That did, my lord, induce me to dispense
A little with my gravity, to advance,
In personating[1] some few favors to him,
The plots and projects of the down-trod Wellborn;
Nor shall I e'er repent, although I suffer
In some few men's opinions for't, the action;
For he that ventured all for my dear husband
Might justly claim an obligation from me
To pay him such a courtesy; which had I
Coyly or over-curiously[2] denied,
It might have argued me of little love
To the deceased.
LOV. What you intended, madam,
For the poor gentleman hath found good success;
For, as I understand, his debts are paid,
And he once more furnished for fair employment;
But all the arts that I have used to raise
The fortunes of your joy and mine, young Allworth,
Stand yet in supposition, though I hope well;
For the young lovers are in wit more pregnant
Than their years can promise; and, for their desires,
On my knowledge, they are equal.
LADY ALL. As my wishes
Are with yours, my lord. Yet give me leave to fear
The building, though well grounded: to deceive
Sir Giles, that's both a lion and a fox
In his proceedings, were a work beyond
The strongest undertakers; not the trial
Of two weak innocents.
LOV. Despair not, madam:
Hard things are compassed oft by easy means;
And judgment, being a gift derived from Heaven,
Though sometimes lodged i' th' hearts of worldly men
That ne'er consider from whom they receive it,
Forsakes such as abuse the giver of it,
Which is the reason that the politic
And cunning statesman, that believes he fathoms
The counsels of all kingdoms on the earth,
Is by simplicity oft over-reached.
LADY ALL. May he be so! yet in his name to express it
Is a good omen.
LOV. May it to myself

[1] pretending.
[2] too fastidiously.

Prove so, good lady, in my suit to you!—
What think you of the motion?
LADY ALL. Troth, my lord,
My own unworthiness may answer for me;
For had you, when that I was in my prime
(My virgin flower uncropped) presented me
With this great favor, looking on my lowness
Not in a glass of self-love, but of truth,
I could not but have thought it as a blessing
Far, far beyond my merit.
LOV. You are too modest,
And undervalue that which is above
My title or whatever I call mine.
I grant, were I a Spaniärd, to marry
A widow might disparage me; but, being
A true-born Englishman, I cannot find
How it can taint my honor: nay, what's more,
That which you think a blemish is to me
The fairest lustre. You already, madam,
Have given sure proofs how dearly you can cherish
A husband that deserves you; which confirms me,
That, if I am not wanting in my care
To do you service, you'll be still the same
That you were to your Allworth: in a word,
Our years, our states, our births are not unequal,
You being descended nobly and allied so.
If then you may be won to make me happy,
But join your lips to mine, and that shall be
A solemn contract.
LADY ALL. I were blind to my own good,
Should I refuse it. [*Kisses him.*] Yet, my lord, receive me
As such a one the study of whose whole life
Shall know no other object but to please you.
LOV. If I return not, with all tenderness,
Equal respect to you, may I die wretched!
LADY ALL. There needs no protestatiön, my lord,
To her that cannot doubt.—

Enter WELLBORN, *handsomely apparelled.*

You are welcome, sir.
Now you look like yourself.
WELL. And will continue
Such in my free acknowledgment that I am
Your creature, madam, and will never hold
My life mine own, when you please to command it.
LOV. It is a thankfulness that well becomes you;
You could not make choice of a better shape
To dress your mind in.
LADY ALL. For me, I am happy
That my endeavors prospered. Saw you of late
Sir Giles, your uncle?
WELL. I heard of him, madam,
By his minister, Marrall; he's grown into strange passions
About his daughter: this last night he looked for
Your lordship at his house, but, missing you,
And she not yet appearing, his wise head
Is much perplexed and troubled.
LOV. It may be,
Sweetheart, my project took.
LADY ALL. I strongly hope.
OVER., *within.* Ha! find her, booby, thou huge lump of nothing;
I'll bore thine eyes out else.
WELL. May it please your lordship,
For some ends of mine own, but to withdraw
A little out of sight, though not of hearing;
You may, perhaps, have sport.
LOV. You shall direct me. [*Steps aside.*

Enter OVERREACH, *with distracted looks, driving in* MARRALL *before him, with a box.*

OVER. I shall sol fa you, rogue!
MAR. Sir, for what cause
Do you use me thus?
OVER. Cause, slave? why, I am angry,
And thou a subject only fit for beating,
And so to cool my choler. Look to the writing; [172
Let but the seal be broke upon the box
That has slept in my cabinet these three years,
I'll rack thy soul for't.
MAR. <I may yet cry quittance,
Though now I suffer and dare not resist.>
OVER. Lady, by your leave, did you see my daughter, lady? [181
And the lord her husband? are they in your house?
If they are, discover, that I may bid 'em joy,
And, as an entrance to her place of honor,
See your ladyship on her left hand, and make curtsies
When she nods on you, which you must receive [191
As a special favor.
LADY ALL. When I know, Sir Giles,
Her state requires such ceremony, I shall pay it;
But, in the meantime, as I am myself,
I give you to understand, I neither know
Nor care where her honor is.
OVER. When you once see her
Supported, and led by the lord her [200 husband,
You'll be taught better.—Nephew.
WELL. Sir.
OVER. No more[3]?
WELL. 'Tis all I owe you.
OVER. Have your redeemed rags
Made you thus insolent?
WELL. Insolent to you?
Why, what are you, sir, unless in your years, [210
At the best, more than myself?
OVER. <His fortune swells him:
'Tis rank,[4] he's married.>
LADY ALL. <This is excellent!>
OVER. Sir, in calm language, though I seldom use it,

[3] *i.e.*, than "sir." [4] Obvious.

I am familiar with the cause that makes you
Bear up thus bravely; there's a certain buzz [220
Of a stolen marriage, do you hear? of a stolen marriage,
In which, 'tis said, there's somebody hath been cozened;
I name no parties.
WELL. Well, sir, and what follows?
OVER. Marry, this; since you are peremptory: remember,
Upon mere hope of your great match, I lent you [230
A thousand pounds: put me in good security,
And suddenly, by mortgage or by statute,
Of some of your new possessions, or I'll have you
Dragged in your lavender[5] robes to the jail: you know me,
And therefore do not trifle. [239
WELL. Can you be
So cruel to your nephew, now he's in
The way to rise? was this the courtesy
You did me "in pure love, and no ends else"?
OVER. End me no ends! Engage the whole estate,
And force your spouse to sign it, you shall have
Three or four thousand more, to roar and swagger [250
And revel in bawdy taverns.
WELL. And beg after;
Mean you not so?
OVER. My thoughts are mine, and free.
Shall I have security?
WELL. No, indeed you shall not,
Nor bond, nor bill, nor bare acknowledgment. [259
Your great looks fright not me.
OVER. But my deeds shall.
Outbraved! [*Both draw.*
LADY ALL., *calling.* Help, murder! murder!

Enter Servants, and separate them.

WELL. Let him come on,

[5] redeemed from pawn.

With all his wrongs and injuries about him,
Armed with his cut-throat practices to guard him;
The right that I bring with me will defend me,
And punish his extortion.
OVER. That I had thee
But single in the field!
LADY ALL. You may; but make not
My house your quarrelling scene.
OVER. Were't in a church,
By Heaven and Hell, I'll do't!
MAR. <Now put him to
The showing of the deed.>
WELL. This rage is vain, sir;
For fighting, fear not, you shall have your hands full,
Upon the least incitement; and, whereas
You charge me with a debt of a thousand pounds,
If there be law (howe'er you have no conscience),
Either restore my land, or I'll recover
A debt, that's truly due to me from you,
In value ten times more than what you challenge.
OVER. I in thy debt? O impudence! did I not purchase
The land left by thy father, that rich land,
That had continuëd in Wellborn's name
Twenty descents; which, like a riotous fool,
Thou didst make sale of? Is not here, inclosed,
The deed that does confirm it mine?
MAR., *to* WELLBORN. <Now, now!>
WELL. I do acknowledge none; I ne'er passed over
Any such land: I grant, for a year or two
You had it in trust, which if you do discharge,
Surrendering the possession, you shall ease
Yourself and me of chargeable suits in law,
Which, if you prove not honest, as I doubt it,
Must of necessity follow.
LADY ALL. In my judgment,
He does advise you well.
OVER. Good! good! conspire
With your new husband, lady; second him
In his dishonest practices; but, when
This manor is extended[6] to my use,
You'll speak in an humbler key, and sue for favor.
LADY ALL. Never: do not hope it.
WELL. Let despair first seize me.
OVER. Yet, to shut up thy mouth, and make thee give
Thyself the lie, the loud lie, I draw out
The precious evidence; if thou canst forswear
Thy hand and seal, and make a forfeit of
Thy ears to the pillory, see! here's that will make
My interest clear— [*Opens the box and displays the bond.*] Ha!
LADY ALL. A fair skin of parchment.
WELL. Indented, I confess, and labels, too;
But neither wax nor words. How! thunderstruck?
Not a syllable to insult with? My wise uncle,
Is this your precious evidence, this that makes
Your interest clear?
OVER. I am o'erwhelmed with wonder!
What prodigy is this? what subtle devil
Hath razed out the inscriptiön? the wax
Turned into dust!—the rest of my deeds whole
As when they were delivered, and this only
Made nothing! do you deal with witches, rascal?
There is a statute for you, which will bring
Your neck in an hempen circle; yes, there is;
And, now 'tis better thought for, cheater, know
This juggling shall not save you.
WELL. To save thee,
Would beggar the stock of mercy.
OVER. Marrall!

[6] seized.

MAR. Sir.
OVER. <Though the witnesses are [370
dead, your testimony
Help with an oath or two; and for thy master,
Thy liberal master, my good honest servant,
I know thou wilt swear anything, to dash
This cunning sleight: besides, I know thou art
A public notary, and such stand in law
For a dozen witnesses; the deed being drawn too [381
By thee, my careful Marrall, and delivered
When thou wert present, will make good my title.
Wilt thou not swear this?>
MAR. I? No, I assure you:
I have a conscience not seared up like yours;
I know no deeds. [390
OVER. Wilt thou betray me?
MAR., *to* WELLBORN. Keep him
From using of his hands, I'll use my tongue,
To his no little torment.
OVER. Mine own varlet
Rebel against me?
MAR. Yes, and uncase you too.
"The idiot, the patch, the slave, the booby, [400
The property fit only to be beaten
For your morning exercise," your "football," or
"The unprofitable lump of flesh," your "drudge,"
Can now anatomize you, and lay open
All your black plots, and level with the earth
Your hill of pride, and, with these gabions guarded, [410
Unload my great artillery, and shake,
Nay, pulverize, the walls you think defend you.
LADY ALL. <How he foams at the mouth with rage!>
WELL. To him again.
OVER. Oh, that I had thee in my gripe; I would tear thee
Joint after joint!
MAR. I know you are a tearer; [420
But I'll have first your fangs pared off, and then
Come nearer to you; when I have discovered,
And made it good before the judge, what ways
And devilish practices you used, to cozen with
An army of whole families, who yet live
And, but enrolled for soldiërs, were able
To take in[7] Dunkirk. [431
WELL. All will come out.
LADY ALL. The better.
OVER. But that I will live, rogue, to torture thee,
And make thee wish, and kneel in vain, to die,
These swords that keep thee from me should fix here,[8]
Although they made my body but one wound, [441
But I would reach thee.
LOV. <Heaven's hand is in this;
One bandog worry the other!>
OVER. I play the fool,
And make my anger but ridiculous:
There will be a time and place; there will be, cowards,
When you shall feel what I dare do.
WELL. I think so: [450
You dare do any ill, yet want true valor
To be honest and repent.
OVER. They are words I know not,
Nor e'er will learn. Patience, the beggar's virtue,

Enter GREEDY *and* PARSON WILLDO.

Shall find no harbor here.—After these storms
At length a calm appears. Welcome, most welcome! [460
There's comfort in thy looks; is the deed done?
Is my daughter married? say but so, my chaplain,
And I am tame.
WILL. Married? yes, I assure you.
OVER. Then vanish all sad thoughts! There's more gold for thee.

[7] capture. [8] *i.e.*, in my breast.

My doubts and fears are in the titles drowned
Of my honorable, my right honorable daughter.
GRE. Here will I be feasting: at least for a month
I am provided: empty guts, croak no more.
You shall be stuffed like bagpipes, not with wind,
But bearing[9] dishes.
OVER., *to* WILLDO. Instantly be here?
To my wish! to my wish!—Now you that plot against me,
And hoped to trip my heels up, that contemned me,
Think on't, and tremble. [*Loud music.*] They come! I hear the music.
A lane there for my lord!
WELL. This sudden heat
May yet be cooled, sir.
OVER. Make way there for my lord!

Enter ALLWORTH *and* MARGARET.

MARG. Sir, first your pardon, then your blessing, with
Your full allowance of the choice I have made.
[*Kneeling.*] As ever you could make use of your reason,
Grow not in passion; since you may as well
Call back the day that's past as untie the knot
Which is too strongly fastened: not to dwell
Too long on words, this is my husband.
OVER. How?
ALL. So I assure you; all the rites of marriage,
With every circumstance, are past. Alas! sir,
Although I am no lord, but a lord's page,
Your daughter and my loved wife mourns not for it;
And, for right honorable son-in-law, you may say,
Your dutiful daughter.
OVER., *to* WILLDO. Devil! are they married?

[9] overloaded.

WILL. Do a father's part, and say, Heaven give them joy!
OVER. Confusion and ruin! speak, and speak quickly,
Or thou art dead.
WILL. They are married.
OVER. Thou hadst better
Have made a contract with the king of fiends
Than these.—My brain turns!
WILL. Why this rage to me?
Is not this your letter, sir, and these the words?
"Marry her to this gentleman."
OVER. It cannot—
Nor will I e'er believe it; 'sdeath! I will not;
That I, that in all passages I touched
At worldly profit have not left a print
Where I have trod for the most curious search
To trace my footsteps, should be gulled by children,
Baffled and fooled, and all my hopes and labors
Defeated and made void!
WELL. As it appears,
You are so, my grave uncle.
OVER. Village nurses
Revenge their wrongs with curses; I'll not waste
A syllable, but thus take the life
Which, wretched, I gave to thee. [*Offers to kill* MARGARET, *but is prevented.*
LOV., *coming forward.* Hold, for your own sake!
Though charity to your daughter hath quite left you,
Will you do an act, though in your hopes lost here,
Can leave no hope for peace or rest hereafter?
Consider; at the best you are but a man,
And cannot so create your aims but that
They may be crossed.
OVER. Lord! thus I spit at thee
And at thy counsel, and again desire thee,
And as thou art a soldier, if thy valor

Dares show itself where multitude and example
Lead not the way, let's quit the house, and change [571
Six words in private.
LOV. I am ready.
LADY ALL. Stay, sir!
Contest with one distracted?
WELL. You'll grow like him,
Should you answer his vain challenge.
OVER. Are you pale?
Borrow his help: though Hercules call it odds, [580
I'll stand against both as I am, hemmed in thus!
Since, like a Libyan lion in the toil,
My fury cannot reach the coward hunters
And only spends itself, I'll quit the place:
Alone I can do nothing; but I have servants
And friends to second me; and, if I make not [590
This house a heap of ashes (by my wrongs,
What I have spoke I will make good), or leave
One throat uncut—if it be possible,
Hell, add to my afflictions! [*Exit.*
MARR. Is't not brave sport?
GRE. "Brave sport!" I am sure it has ta'en away my stomach!
I do not like the sauce. [600
ALL. Nay, weep not, dearest,
Though it express your pity; what's decreed
Above we cannot alter.
LADY ALL. His threats move me
No scruple, madam.
MARR. Was it not a rare trick,
An it please your worship, to make the deed nothing? [609
I can do twenty neater, if you please
To purchase and grow rich; for I will be
Such a solicitor and steward for you,
As never worshipful had.
WELL. I do believe thee;
But first discover the quaint[10] means you used
To raze out the conveyance.

[10] cunning.

MARR. They are mysteries
Not to be spoke in public: certain minerals [620
Incorporated in the ink and wax.
Besides, he gave me nothing, but still fed me
With hopes and blows; and that was the inducement
To this conundrum. If it please your worship
To call to memory, this mad beast once caused me
To urge you or to drown or hang yourself; [631
I'll do the like to him, if you command me.
WELL. You are a rascal! he that dares be false
To a master, though unjust, will ne'er be true
To any other. Look not for reward
Or favor from me; I will shun thy sight
As I would do a basilisk's; thank my pity, [641
If thou keep thy ears; howe'er,[11] I will take order
Your practice shall be silenced.
GRE. I'll commit him,
If you'll have me, sir.
WELL. That were to little purpose;
His conscience be his prison. Not a word,
But instantly be gone.
ORD., *kicking him.* Take this kick with you. [651
AMB. And this. [*Also kicks him.*
FUR. If that I had my cleaver here,
I would divide your knave's head.
MARR. This is the haven
False servants still arrive at. [*Exit.*

Re-enter OVERREACH

LADY ALL. Come again!
LOV. Fear not; I am your guard. [659
WELL. His looks are ghastly.
WILL. Some little time I have spent, under your favors,
In physical studies, and, if my judgment err not,
He's mad beyond recovery: but observe him,

[11] in any case.

And look to yourselves.
OVER. Why, is not the whole world
Included in myself? to what use then
Are friends and servants? Say there [670
were a squadron
Of pikes, lined through with shot, when
I am mounted
Upon my injuries, shall I fear to charge
them?
No: I'll through the battalia, and, that
routed, [*Flourishing his sword, sheathed* [12]
I'll fall to execution.—Ha! I am feeble:
Some undone widow sits upon mine arm,
And takes away the use of't; and my
sword, [682
Glued to my scabbard with wronged or-
phans' tears,
Will not be drawn. Ha! what are these?
sure, hangmen,
That come to bind my hands, and then
to drag me
Before the judgment-seat: now they are
new shapes, [690
And do appear like Furies, with steel
whips
To scourge my ulcerous soul. Shall I
then fall
Ingloriously, and yield? no; spite of
Fate,
I will be forced to hell like to myself.
Though you were legions of accursëd
spirits, [699
Thus would I fly among you. [*Rushes forward, and flings himself on the ground.*
WELL. There's no help;
Disarm him first, then bind him.
GRE. Take a mittimus,[13]
And carry him to Bedlam.
LOV. How he foams!
WELL. And bites the earth!
WILL. Carry him to some
dark room, [710
There try what art can do for his re-
covery.
MAR. Oh, my dear father. [*They force* OVERREACH *off.*
ALL. You must be patient, mistress.
LOV. Here is a precedent to teach
wicked men
That, when they leave religion and turn
atheists,
Their own abilities leave 'em. Pray you
take comfort; [721
I will endeavor you shall be his guardi-
ans
In his distractions;—and, for your land,
Master Wellborn,
Be it good or ill in law, I'll be an umpire
Between you and this, the undoubted
heir
Of Sir Giles Overreach.—For me, [*taking* LADY ALLWORTH'S *arm*] here's the
anchor [731
That I must fix on.
ALL. What you shall determine,
My lord, I will allow of.
WELL. 'Tis the language
That I speak too; but there is something
else
Beside the repossession of my land
And payment of my debts, that I must
practise. [740
I had a reputation; but 'twas lost
In my loose course; and, till I redeem it
Some noble way, I am but half made up.
It is a time of action; if your lordship
Will please to confer a company upon me
In your command, I doubt not, in my
service
To my king and country, but I shall do
something
That may make me right again. [750
LOV. Your suit is granted,
And you loved for the motion.

EPILOGUE

WELL., *coming forward.* Nothing
wants then
But your allowance; and in that our all
Is comprehended; it being known, nor we,
Nor he that wrote the comedy, can be
free,
Without your manumission; which, if you
Grant willingly, as a fair favor due
To the poet's and our labors (as you
may,
For we despair not, gentlemen, of the
play),
We jointly shall profess your grace hath
might
To teach us action and him how to write.

[12] Q, "unsheathed." [13] form of committal.

THE CHANGELING

BY

THOMAS MIDDLETON

AND

WILLIAM ROWLEY

INTRODUCTION

With the exception of "Othello," there is no finer psychological tragedy in the language than this, which takes the first place among all plays written in collaboration. It is the work of Middleton and William Rowley, both of whom are here seen at their best. It contains two clearly distinct and but lightly connected plots, the one being manipulated wholly by Rowley, the other mainly by Middleton. Rowley's comic story is of but slight interest, and might be omitted without detriment to the play as a whole, were it not that to omit it would leave parts of the two final scenes unintelligible. If Rowley's achievement here be considered his finest, it is not by reason of his provision of the sub-plot, but because of his masterly opening and ending of the tragic story; but the great glory of the drama is Middleton's, his scenes being nowhere surpassed in English tragedy outside the pages of Shakespeare, and nowhere equalled save in Webster's mighty masterpiece.

How near we were to losing this glory of Elizabethan drama is seen when we note that, though it was acted at Court in January, 1623–4, and in all probability first saw the light in 1623, being founded on a book (Reynolds' "Triumph of God's Revenge against Murder") published in 1621, it did not get into print until 1653.

That it has come to us as it was first written there is some reason to doubt. It seems likely that in the original version there was at least one scene in which Antonio and Franciscus arranged to become counterfeit inmates of Alibius's institution for the insane; as it is, Antonio is introduced in I 2 without any preparation; and the introduction of Franciscus in III 3 leaves even more to be desired. In IV 3 we have careful preparation for a masque at the castle of Vermandero; but it comes to nought: it seems probable that Rowley's intentions in this matter were not realized. Probably Middleton's ideas were different and prevailed.

It is for its study of De Flores and Beatrice Joanna that the play is so remarkable. The one is a man in the grip of a devastating passion; the other is a girl, the object of this passion, filled with an almost uncontrollable loathing for the man who worships her. A more outstanding and better-realized figure than that of De Flores is scarcely to be found throughout the entire range of Elizabethan drama: the

man is instinct with life; his grim determination wins our admiration, however we may resent his utter unscrupulousness in the achieving of his purpose. Than the scene in which the girl puts herself in his power and the one in which he exacts his price nothing could be finer: both dramatically and psychologically they attain perfection. In both of them the girl, though less striking, is no less real than the man. Proud, disdainful, feather-brained, innocent, yet callous and unscrupulous, too pure-minded to comprehend the danger of the course she has laid down for herself, and not above making use for her purpose even of the man she loathes with the most extreme loathing, she is shown by Middleton quite early in the play as filled with an uneasy presentiment of the influence he is destined to have on her life:

> I never see this fellow but I think
> Of some harm towards me; danger's in my mind still;
> I scarce leave trembling of an houŕ after.

With wonderful art the dramatist brings her to love him, after he has had his way with her; and very excellently too is the decline in her modesty indicated in her conversation with Alsemero in the closing scene, though it is Rowley who must have the credit of that. It is to Rowley, however, that we owe the one false note (twice struck) in the delineation of De Flores, who is made to say, "If but to vex her, I will haunt her still." The inferiority of that view to that of Middleton is obvious. To the greater of the two poets, De Flores was so utterly the slave of his passion as to be incapable of keeping away from the object of his devotion. The conception of De Flores, as we have him, would, then, seem to be entirely Middleton's. It is to him we owe the man's sinister utterances in II 2, expressive of his realization of his opportunity, and the pregnant and dramatic brevity of his reception of the name of the man who is to be his victim:

> His end's upon him;
> He shall be seen no more.

It is to him we owe the man's sheer and stark appreciation of realities, as when he comments scornfully on Beatrice's talking of danger when her "fame's on fire," and the ruffian's admirable expression of his unshakable ruthlessness:

> Can you weep Fate from its determined purpose?
> So soon may you weep me.

To Middleton, too, are due the most magnificent touches in the portrayal of her who was at once the villain's victim and his partner, his instigator and his inspiration in the crime that gave her to him—her very feminine horror at seeing the severed finger of the man whose heart-blood she had shed, and her amazed outburst of almost incredu-

lous comprehension when at last she realizes the price she has to pay, her wonderment that a man who has committed such a crime can be "so wicked" as to make the death he has wrought the murderer of her honor. What a fine dramatic touch it is too that makes her fears for her lover, Alsemero, and her unwillingness that he should incur any danger, turn her thoughts to the object of her hate, and so effect her ruin!

Tomaso is another character finely realized. He is a sinister figure of remarkable force, enough to make one think that Middleton was quite capable of giving us the vivid presentation of the Husband in "A Yorkshire Tragedy." The dramatist's dramatic quality is shown again in the warning he makes Tomaso utter to his doomed brother in II 1, and in the dreadful irony of Beatrice's words when she sends Diaphanta to her room and to her death in V 1. Middleton's literary characteristics are not seen here in their most extreme form. The whole of the tragic story is well and carefully constructed, and some, at least, of the incidents seem to be of Middleton's own invention. Scattered throughout are some lines of exceeding loveliness. It is a pity that the silly underplot should have given its name to a tragedy that ranks amongst the very finest in the language.

CHARACTERS

VERMANDERO, *governor of the castle of Alicant.*
TOMASO DE PIRACQUO, *a noble lord.*
ALONZO DE PIRACQUO, *his brother, suitor to Beatrice.*
ALSEMERO, *a nobleman.*
JASPERINO, *his friend.*
ALIBIUS, *a doctor.*
LOLLIO, *his man.*
PEDRO, *friend to Antonio.*
ANTONIO, *the changeling.*
FRANCISCUS.
DE FLORES, *servant to Vermandero.*
BEATRICE JOANNA, *daughter to Vermandero.*
DIAPHANTA, *her waiting-woman.*
ISABELLA, *wife of Alibius.*
Madmen, Servants.

PLACE: *Alicant.*
TIME: *Early 17th Century.*

THE CHANGELING

ACT ONE

Scene I (R) [1]

Alsemero *is on a visit to Alicant and has seen and been fascinated by* Beatrice Joanna. *She, too, is captivated by him but he has arrived on the scene just too late, since she has, only five days previously, been betrothed to* Alonzo de Piracquo. Alsemero *has been putting off his departure from Alicant, and is now alone in the street contemplating* Beatrice's *charms.*

Als. 'Twas in the temple where I first beheld her,
And now again the same: what omen yet
Follows of that? None but imaginary.
Why should my hopes or fate be timorous?
The place is holy, so is my intent:
I love her beauties to the holy purpose;
And that, methinks, admits comparison
With man's first creation, the place blest,
And is his right home back, if he achieve it.
The church hath first begun our interview,
And that's the place must join us into one;
So there's beginning and perfection too.

Enter Jasperino.

Jas. O sir, are you here? Come, the wind's fair with you;
You're like to have a swift and pleasant passage.
Als. Sure, you're deceived, friend, 'tis contrary,
In my best judgment.
Jas. What, for Malta?
If you could buy a gale amongst the witches,
They could not serve you such a lucky pennyworth
As comes a' God's name.
Als. Even now I observed
The temple's vane to turn full in my face;
I know it is against me.
Jas. Against you?
Then you know not where you are.
Als. Not well, indeed.
Jas. Are you not well, sir?
Als. Yes, Jasperino,
Unless there be some hidden malady
Within me, that I understand not.
Jas. And that
I begin to doubt, sir. I never knew
Your inclination to travel at a pause
With any cause to hinder it, till now.
Ashore you were wont to call your servants up,
And help to trap your horses for the speed;
At sea I've seen you weigh the anchor with 'em,
Hoist sails for fear to lose the foremost breath,
Be in continual prayers for fair winds;
And have you changed your orisons?
Als. No, friend;
I keep the same church, same devotiön.
Jas. Lover I'm sure you're none; the stoic was
Found in you long ago; your mother nor
Best friends, who have set snares of beauty, ay,
And choice ones too, could never trap you that way.
What might be the cause?
Als. Lord, how violent
Thou art! I was but meditating of
Somewhat I heard within the temple.
Jas. Is this
Violence? 'Tis but idleness compared

[1] With apparently some lines by Middleton.

With your haste yesterday.
ALS. I'm all this while
A-going, man.

Enter SERVANTS.

JAS. Backwards, I think, sir. Look,
Your servants.
1 SER. The seamen call; shall we
board your trunks?
ALS. No, not to-day. [90
JAS. 'Tis the critical day, it seems,
And the sign in Aquarius.
2 SER. We must not to sea to-day;
This smoke will bring forth fire.
ALS. Keep all on shore; I do not know
the end,
Which needs I must do, of an affair in
hand,
Ere I can go to sea. [99
1 SER. Well, your pleasure.
2 SER. <Let him e'en take his leisure too; we are safer on land.> [*Exeunt* SERVANTS.

Enter BEATRICE, DIAPHANTA, *and Servants.* ALSEMERO *accosts* BEATRICE *and then kisses her.*

JAS. <How now? The laws of the Medes are changed sure; salute a woman! He kisses too; wonderful! Where learnt he this? and does it perfectly too. In [110 my conscience, he ne'er rehearsed it before. Nay, go on; this will be stranger and better news at Valencia than if he had ransomed half Greece from the Turk.>
BEAT. You are a scholar, sir?
ALS. A weak one, lady.
BEAT. Which of the sciences is this love
you speak of?
ALS. From your tongue I take it to be
music. [120
BEAT. You're skilful in it, can sing at
first sight.
ALS. And I have showed you all my
skill at once;
I want more words to express me fur-
ther,
And must be forced to repetitiön;
I love you dearly.
BEAT. Be better advised, sir:
Our eyes are sentinels unto our judg-
ments, [131
And should give certain judgment what
they see;
But they are rash sometimes, and tell us
wonders
Of common things, which when our judg-
ments find,
They can then check the eyes, and call
them blind.
ALS. But I am further, lady; yester-
day [141
Was mine eyes' employment, and hither
now
They brought my judgment, where are
both agreed.
Both houses then consenting, 'tis agreed;
Only there wants the confirmation
By the hand royal; that's your part,
lady. [149
BEAT. Oh, there's one above me, sir.
<For five days past
To be recalled! Sure mine eyes were
mistaken;
This was the man was meant me. That
he should come
So near his time, and miss it!>
JAS. <We might have come by the carriers from Valencia, I see, and saved all our sea-provision; we are at farthest, sure. Methinks I should do something too; [161
I meant to be a venturer in this voyage.
Yonder's another vessel; I'll board her;
If she be lawful prize, down goes her
topsail.> [*Accosts* DIAPHANTA.

Enter DE FLORES, *a man of great physical ugliness, for whom* BEATRICE *entertains the most violent loathing.*

DE F. Lady, your father— [169
BEAT. Is in health, I hope.
DE F. Your eye shall instantly in-
struct you, lady;
He's coming hitherward.
BEAT. What needed then
Your duteous preface? I had rather
He had come unexpected; you must stall
A good presence with unnecessary blab-
bing;
And how welcome for your part you are
I'm sure you know. [180
DE F. <Will't never mend, this
scorn,

One side nor other? Must I be enjoined
To follow still whilst she flies from me? Well,
Fates, do your worst, I'll please myself with sight
Of her at all opportunities,
If but to spite her anger. I know she had [190
Rather see me dead than living; and yet
She knows no cause for't but a peevish will.> [*Exit.*

ALS. You seemed displeased, lady, on the sudden.

BEAT. Your pardon, sir, 'tis my infirmity;
Nor can I other reason render you
Than his or hers, of[2] some particular thing [200
They must abandon as a deadly poison,
Which to a thousand other tastes were wholesome;
Such to mine eyes is that same fellow there,
The same that report speaks of the basilisk.

ALS. This is a frequent frailty in our nature; [209
There's scarce a man amongst a thousand found
But hath his imperfection: one distastes
The scent of roses, which to infinites
Most pleasing is and odoriferous;
One oil, the enemy of poison;
Another wine, the cheerer of the heart
And lively refresher of the countenance.
Indeed this fault, if so it be, is general;
There's scarce a thing but is both loved and loathed: [220
Myself, I must confess, have the same frailty.

BEAT. And what may be your poison, sir? I'm bold with you.

ALS. What[3] might be your desire, perhaps; a cherry.

BEAT. I am no enemy to any creature
My memory has, but yon gentleman.

ALS. He does ill to tempt your sight, if he knew it. [230

BEAT. He cannot be ignorant of that, sir,
I have not spared to tell him so; and I want
To help myself, since he's a gentleman
In good respect with my father, and follows him.

ALS. He's out of his place then now. [*They talk apart.*

JAS. I am a mad wag, wench. [240

DIA. So methinks; but, for your comfort, I can tell you, we have a doctor in the city that undertakes the cure of such.

JAS. Tush, I know what physic is best for the state of mine own body.

DIA. 'Tis scarce a well-governed state, I believe.

JAS. I could show thee such a thing with an ingredient that we two would compound together, and, if it did not [250 tame the maddest blood i' th' town for two hours after, I'll ne'er profess physic again.

DIA. A little poppy, sir, were good to cause you sleep.

JAS. Poppy? I'll give thee a pop i' th' lips for that first, and begin there. Poppy is one simple indeed, and cuckoo (what-you-call't) another. I'll discover no more now; another time I'll show thee all. [*Exit.* [261

Enter VERMANDERO *and Servants* [*including* DE FLORES].

BEAT. My father, sir.

VER. O Joanna, I came to meet thee.
Your devotion's ended?

BEAT. For this time, sir.—
<I shall change my saint, I fear me; I find [269
A giddy turning in me.> Sir, this while
I am beholding to this gentleman,
Who left his own way to keep me company,
And in discourse I find him much desirous
To see your castle. He hath deserved it, sir,
If ye please to grant it.

VER. With all my heart, sir.
Yet there's an article between; I must know [280
Your country; we use not to give survey
Of our chief strengths to strangers; our citadels

[2] B, or. [3] B, And what.

Are placed conspicuous to outward view,
On promonts' tops, but within are secrets.
ALS. A Valencian, sir.
VER. A Valencian?
That's native, sir. Of what name, I beseech you? [290
ALS. Alsemero, sir.
VER. Alsemero? Not the son
Of John de Alsemero?
ALS. The same, sir.
VER. My best love bids you welcome.
BEAT. He was wont
To call me so, and then he speaks a most
Unfeignëd truth. [299
VER. O sir, I knew your father;
We two were in acquaintance long ago,
Before our chins were worth iulan down,
And so continued till the stamp of time
Had coined us into silver. Well, he's gone;
A good soldier went with him.
ALS. You went together in that, sir.
VER. No, by Saint Jacques, I came behind him;
Yet I've done somewhat too; an unhappy day [311
Swallowed him at last at Gibraltar,
In fight with those rebellious Hollanders.
Was it not so?
ALS. Whose death I had revenged,
Or followed him in fate, had not the late league
Prevented me.
VER. Ay, ay, 'twas time to breathe.—
O Joanna, I should ha' told thee news;
I saw Piracquo lately. [321
BEAT. <That's ill news.>
VER. He's hot preparing for this day of triumph:
Thou must be a bride within this sevennight.
ALS. <Ha!>
BEAT. Nay, good sir, be not so violent; with speed
I cannot render satisfactiön [330
Unto the dear companion of my soul,
Virginity, whom I thus long have lived with,
And part with it so rude and suddenly.
Can such friends divide, never to meet again,
Without a solemn farewell?
VER. Tush, tush! there's a toy.
ALS. <I must now part, and never meet again [340
With any joy on earth.> Sir, your pardon;
My affairs call on me.
VER. How, sir? By no means:
Not changed so soon, I hope? You must see my castle,
And her best entertainment, ere we part;
I shall think myself unkindly used else.
Come, come, let's on; I had good hope your stay [350
Had been a while with us in Alicant;
I might have bid you to my daughter's wedding.
ALS. <He means to feast me, and poisons me beforehand.>
I should be dearly glad to be there, sir,
Did my occasions suit as I could wish.
BEAT. I shall be sorry if you be not there [359
When it is done, sir; but not so suddenly.
VER. I tell you, sir, the gentleman's complete,
A courtiër and a gallant enriched
With many fair and noble ornaments;
I would not change him for a son-in-law
For any he in Spain, the proudest he,
And we have great ones; that you know.
ALS. He's much
Bound to you, sir. [369
VER. He shall be bound to me
As fast as this tie can hold him; I'll want
My will else.
BEAT. <I shall want mine, if you do it.>
VER. But come; by the way I'll tell you more of him.
ALS. <How shall I dare to venture in his castle,
When he discharges murderers[4] at the gate? [380
But I must on; for back I cannot go.>
BEAT., *seeing* DE FLORES. <Not this serpent gone yet?> [*Drops a glove.*
VER. Look, girl, thy glove's fallen.

[4] cannon.

Stay, stay; De Flores, help a little.
[*Exeunt* Vermandero, Alsemero, *and Servants.*
De F. Here, lady. [*Offers her the glove.* [390
Beat. Mischief on your officious forwardness!
Who bade you stoop? They touch my hand no more:
There! For t'other's sake I part with this; [*Takes off and throws down the other glove.*
Take 'em, and draw thine own skin off with 'em! [*Exit with* Diaphanta *and Servants.* [400
De F. Here's a favor come with a mischief now! I know
She had rather wear my pelt tanned in a pair
Of dancing pumps than I should thrust my fingers
Into her sockets here. I know she hates me,
Yet cannot choose but love her. No matter, [410
If but to vex her, I will haunt her still;
Though I get nothing else, I'll have my will. [*Exit.*

Scene II (R)

Alibius *is the keeper of a private asylum for idiots and madmen. He is very jealous of his young wife and is afraid that some of the visitors to the institution may give him reason for jealousy. He is enjoining upon his comic servant,* Lollio, *the duty of guarding her.*

Alib. Lollio, I must trust thee with a secret; [9
But thou must keep it.
Lol. I was ever close to a secret, sir.
Alib. The diligence that I have found in thee,
The care and industry already past,
Assures me of thy good continuance.
Lollio, I have a wife.
Lol. Fie, sir, 'tis too late to keep her secret; she's known to be married all the town and country over.
Alib. Thou goest too fast, my Lollio. That knowledge, [21
I allow no man can be barred it;
But there is a knowledge which is nearer,
Deeper, and sweeter, Lollio.
Lol. Well, sir, let us handle that between you and I.
Alib. 'Tis that I go about, man. Lollio,
My wife is young.
Lol. So much the worse to be kept secret, sir. [31
Alib. Why, now thou meet'st the substance of the point;
I am old, Lollio.
Lol. No, sir, 'tis I am old Lollio.
Alib. Yet why may not this concord and sympathize?
Old trees and young plants often grow together,
Well enough agreeing. [40
Lol. Ay, sir, but the old trees raise themselves higher and broader than the young plants.
Alib. Shrewd application! There's the fear, man;
I would wear my ring on my own finger;
Whilst it is borrowed, it is none of mine,
But his that useth it.
Lol. You must keep it on still then; if it but lie by, one or other will be thrusting into't. [51
Alib. Thou conceiv'st me, Lollio; here thy watchful eye
Must have employment. I cannot always be
At home.
Lol. I dare swear you cannot.
Alib. I must look out.
Lol. I know't, you must look out; 'tis every man's case. [60
Alib. Here, I do say, must thy employment be,
To watch her treadings, and in my absence
Supply my place.
Lol. I'll do my best, sir; yet surely I cannot see who you should have cause to be jealous of.
Alib. Thy reason for that, Lollio? It is [70
A comfortable question.
Lol. We have but two sorts of people

in the house, and both under the whip, that's fools and madmen; the one has not wit enough to be knaves, and the other not knavery enough to be fools.

ALIB. Ay, those are all my patients, Lollio;
I do profess the cure of either sort;
My trade, my living 'tis; I thrive by it;
But here's the care that mixes with my thrift: [82
The daily visitants, that come to see
My brain-sick patiënts, I would not have
To see my wife. Gallants I do observe
Of quick enticing eyes, rich in habits,
Of stature and proportion very comely:
These are most shrewd temptations, Lollio. [89

LOL. They may be easily answered, sir; if they come to see the fools and madmen, you and I may serve the turn, and let my mistress alone; she's of neither sort.

ALIB. 'Tis a good ward[5] indeed; come they to see
Our madmen or our fools, let 'em see no more
Than what they come for; by that consequent [100
They must not see her; I'm sure she's no fool.

LOL. And I'm sure she's no madman.

ALIB. Hold that buckler fast; Lollio, my trust
Is on thee, and I account it firm and strong.
What hour is't, Lollio?

LOL. Towards belly-hour, sir.

ALIB. Dinner-time? Thou mean'st twelve o'clock? [111

LOL. Yes, sir, for every part has his hour: we wake at six and look about us, that's eye hour; at seven we should pray, that's knee-hour: at eight walk, that's leg-hour; at nine gather flowers and pluck a rose, that's nose-hour; at ten we drink, that's mouth hour; at eleven lay about us for victuals, that's hand-hour; at twelve go to dinner, that's belly-hour.

ALIB. Profoundly, Lollio! It will be long [122
Ere all thy scholars learn this lesson, and
I did look to have a new one entered.—
Stay,
I think my expectation is come home.

Enter PEDRO *and* ANTONIO. *The latter has disguised himself as an idiot in order that he might have access to* ALIBIUS' *wife.* [130

PED. Save you, sir; my business speaks itself:
This sight takes off the labor of my tongue.

ALIB. Ay, ay, sir, it is plain enough, you mean
Him for my patient.

PED. And if your pains prove but commodious, to give but some little strength to the[6] sick and weak part of nature [140 in him, these are [*gives him money*] but patterns to show you of the whole pieces that will follow to you, beside the charge of diet, washing, and other necessaries, fully defrayed.

ALIB. Believe it, sir, there shall no care be wanting.

LOL. Sir, an officer in this place may deserve something. The trouble will pass through my hands. [150

PED. 'Tis fit something should come to your hands then, sir. [*Gives him money.*

LOL. Yes, sir, 'tis I must keep him sweet, and read to him: what is his name?

PED. His name is Antonio; marry, we use but half to him, only Tony.

LOL. Tony, Tony, 'tis enough, and a very good name for a fool.—What's your name, Tony? [161

ANT. He, he, he! well, I thank you, cousin; he, he, he!

LOL. Good boy! hold up your head.—He can laugh; I perceive by that he is no beast.

PED. Well, sir,
If you can raise him but to any height,
Any degree of wit; might he attain,
As I might say, to creep on but all four
Towards the chair of wit, or walk on crutches, [172

[5] defence.

[6] B, his.

'Twould add an honor to your worthy pains,
And a great family might pray for you,
To which he should be heir, had he discretion
To claim and guide his own. Assure you, sir,
He is a gentleman. [180

Lol. Nay, there's nobody doubted that; at first sight I knew him for a gentleman; he looks no other yet.

Ped. Let him have good attendance and sweet lodging.

Lol. As good as my mistress lies in, sir; and, as you allow us time and means, we can raise him to the higher degree of discretion. [189

Ped. Nay, there shall no cost want, sir.

Lol. He will hardly be stretched up to the wit of a magnifico.

Ped. O no, that's not to be expected; far shorter will be enough.

Lol. I'll warrant you I'll make him fit to bear office in five weeks; I'll undertake to wind him up to the wit of constable.

Ped. If it be lower than that, it might serve turn. [200

Lol. No, fie; to level him with a headborough, beadle, or watchman, were but little better than he is. Constable I'll able him; if he do come to be a justice afterwards, let him thank the keeper: or I'll go further with you; say I do bring him up to my own pitch, say I make him as wise as myself.

Ped. Why, there I would have it. [209

Lol. Well, go to; either I'll be as arrant a fool as he, or he shall be as wise as I, and then I think 'twill serve his turn.

Ped. Nay, I do like thy wit passing well.

Lol. Yes, you may; yet if I had not been a fool, I had had more wit than I have too. Remember what state[7] you found me in.

Ped. I will, and so leave you. Your best cares, I beseech you. [220

Alib. Take you none with you, leave 'em all with us. [*Exit* Pedro.

[7] business.

Ant. O, my cousin's gone! cousin, cousin, O!

Lol. Peace, peace, Tony; you must not cry, child, you must be whipped if you do; your cousin is here still; I am your cousin, Tony.

Ant. He, he! then I'll not cry, if thou be'st my cousin; he, he, he! [230

Lol. I were best try his wit a little, that I may know what form to place him in.

Alib. Ay, do, Lollio; do.

Lol. I must ask him easy questions at first.—Tony, how many true[8] fingers has a tailor on his right hand?

Ant. As many as on his left, cousin. [240

Lol. Good: and how many on both?

Ant. Two less than a deuce, cousin.

Lol. Very well answered. I come to you again, cousin Tony; how many fools goes to a wise man?

Ant. Forty in a day sometimes, cousin.

Lol. Forty in a day? How prove you that?

Ant. All that fall out amongst themselves, and go to a lawyer to be made friends. [249

Lol. A parlous fool! he must sit in the fourth form at least. I perceive that.—I come again, Tony; how many knaves make an honest man?

Ant. I know not that, cousin.

Lol. No, the question is too hard for you. I'll tell you, cousin; there's three knaves may make an honest man,—a sergeant, a jailor, and a beadle; the sergeant catches him, the jailor holds him, and the beadle lashes him; and if he be not honest then, the hangman must cure him. [261

Ant. Ha, ha, ha! that's fine sport, cousin.

Alib. This was too deep a question for the fool, Lollio.

Lol. Yes, this might have served yourself, though I say't.—Once more and you shall go play, Tony.

Ant. Ay, play at push-pin, cousin; ha, he! [270

Lol. So thou shalt: say how many fools are here—

Ant. Two; cousin; thou and I.

[8] honest.

Lol. Nay, you're too forward there, Tony. Mark my question; how many fools and knaves are here; a fool before a knave, a fool behind a knave, between every two fools a knave; how many fools, how many knaves? [279

Ant. I never learned so far, cousin.

Alib. Thou puttest too hard questions to him, Lollio.

Lol. I'll make him understand it easily. —Cousin, stand there.

Ant. Ay, cousin.

Lol. Master, stand you next the fool.

Alib. Well, Lollio.

Lol. Here's my place. Mark now, Tony, there's a fool before a knave.

Ant. That's I, cousin. [290

Lol. Here's a fool behind a knave, that's I; and between us two fools there is a knave, that's my master, 'tis but we three, that's all.

Ant. We three, we three, cousin.

1 Mad., *within*. Put's head i' th' pillory, the bread's too little.

2 Mad., *within*. Fly, fly, and he catches the swallow. [299

3 Mad., *within*. Give her more onion, or the devil put the rope about her crag.[9]

Lol. You may hear what time of day it is; the chimes of Bedlam goes.

Alib., *calling*. Peace, peace, or the wire[10] comes!

3 Mad., *within*. Cat whore, cat whore! her permasant, her permasant! [11]

Alib., *calling*. Peace, I say!—Their hour's come, they must be fed, Lollio. [309

Lol. There's no hope of recovery of that Welsh madman; was undone by a mouse that spoiled him a permasant; lost his wits for't.

Alib. Go to your charge, Lollio; I'll to mine.

Lol. Go you to your madmen's ward, let me alone with your fools.

Alib. And remember my last charge, Lollio. [*Exit*. [319

Lol. Of which your patients do you think I am? Come, Tony, you must amongst your school-fellows now; there's pretty scholars amongst 'em, I can tell you; there's some of 'em at *stultus, stulta, stultum*.

Ant. I would see the madmen, cousin, if they would not bite me.

Lol. No, they shall not bite thee, Tony.

Ant. They bite when they are at dinner, do they not, coz? [330

Lol. They bite at dinner, indeed, Tony. Well, I hope to get credit by thee; I like thee the best of all the scholars that ever I brought up; and thou shalt prove a wise man, or I'll prove a fool myself. [*Exeunt*

[9] neck. [10] whip.
[11] Parmesan cheese.

ACT TWO

Scene I (M)

Beatrice *enters to* Jasperino *in a room in the castle. She has in her hand a letter which she has written to* Alsemero, *making an appointment with him.*

Beat. O sir, I'm ready now for that fair service
Which makes the name of friend sit glorious on you!
Good angels and this conduct be your guide! [10
[*Giving the paper.*] Fitness of time and place is there set down, sir.

Jas. The joy I shall return rewards my service. [*Exit*.

Beat. How wise is Alsemero in his friend!
It is a sign he makes his choice with judgment;
Then I appear in nothing more approved
Than making choice of him; for 'tis a principle, [21
He that can choose
That bosom well who of his thoughts partakes,
Proves most discreet in every choice he makes.
Methinks I love now with the eyes of judgment,
And see the way to merit, clearly see it.
A true deserver like a diamond sparkles;
In darkness you may see him, that's in absence, [32
Which is the greatest darkness falls on love;

Yet is he best discerned then
With intellectual eyesight. What's Piracquo
My father spends his breath for? And his blessing
Is only mine as I regard his name, [40
Else it goes from me, and turns head against me,
Transformed into a curse. Some speedy way
Must be remembered. He's so forward too,
So urgent that way, scarce allows me breath
To speak to my new comforts. [49

Enter De Flores.

De F. <Yonder's she;
Whatever ails me, now a-late especially,
I can as well be hanged as refrain seeing her;
Some twenty times a day, nay, not so little,
Do I force errands, frame ways and excuses,
To come into her sight; and I've small reason for't, [60
And less encouragement, for she baits me still
Every time worse than other; does profess herself
The cruellest enemy to my face in town;
At no hand can abide the sight of me,
As if danger or ill-luck hung in my looks.
I must confess my face is bad enough,
But I know far worse has better fortune,
And not endured alone, but doted on; [70
And yet such pick-haired faces, chins like witches',
Here and there five hairs whispering in a corner,
As if they grew in fear one of another,
Wrinkles like troughs, where swine-deformity swills
The tears of perjury, that lie there like wash [79
Fallen from the slimy and dishonest eye:
Yet such a one plucks sweets without restraint,
And has the grace of beauty to his sweet.
Though my hard fate has thrust me out to servitude,
I tumbled into th' world a gentleman.
She turns her blessëd eye upon me now,
And I'll endure all storms before I part with't.>
Beat. <Again? [90
This ominous ill-faced fellow more disturbs me
Than all my other passions.>
De F. <Now't begins again;
I'll stand this storm of hail, though the stones pelt me.>
Beat. Thy business? What's thy business?
De F. <Soft and fair!
I cannot part so soon now.> [100
Beat. <The villain's fixed.>
Thou standing toad-pool—
De F. <The shower falls amain now.>
Beat. Who sent thee? What's thy errand? Leave my sight!
De F. My lord your father, charged me to deliver
A message to you.
Beat. What, another since?
Do't, and be hanged then; let me be rid of thee. [111
De F. True service merits mercy.
Beat. What's thy message?
De F. Let beauty settle but in patiënce,
You shall hear all.
Beat. A dallying, trifling torment!
De F. Signor Alonzo de Piracquo, lady,
Sole brother to Tomaso de Piracquo—
Beat. Slave, when wilt make an end?
De F. Too soon I shall.
Beat. What all this while of him? [121
De F. The said Alonzo,
With the foresaid Tomaso—
Beat. Yet again?
De F. Is new alighted.
Beat. Vengeance strike the news!
Thou thing most loathed, what cause was there in this
To bring thee to my sight?
De F. My lord your father
Charged me to seek you out. [131
Beat. Is there no other
To send his errand by?
De F. It seems 'tis my luck
To be i' th' way still.
Beat. Get thee from me!

DE F. So!
<Why, am not I an ass, to devise ways
Thus to be railed at? I must see her still!
I shall have a mad qualm within this hour again,
I know't; and, like a common Garden bull,
I do but take breath to be lugged[1] again.
What this may bode I know not; I'll despair the less,
Because there's daily precedents of bad faces
Beloved beyond all reason. These foul chops
May come into favor one day 'mongst their[2] fellows.
Wrangling has proved the mistress of good pastime;
As children cry themselves asleep, I ha' seen
Women have chid themselves a-bed to men.> [*Exit.*
BEAT. I never see this fellow but I think
Of some harm towards me; danger's in my mind still;
I scarce leave trembling of an hour after.
The next good mood I find my father in,
I'll get him quite discarded. O, I was
Lost in this small disturbance, and forgot
Affliction's fiercer torrent that now comes
To bear down all my comforts!

Enter VERMANDERO, ALONZO, *and* TOMASO.

VER. You're both welcome;
But an especial one belongs to you, sir,
To whose most noble name our love presents
Th' addition of a son, our son Alonzo.
ALON. The treasury of honor cannot bring forth
A title I should more rejoice in, sir.
VER. You have improved it well.— Daughter, prepare;
The day will steal upon thee suddenly.
BEAT. <Howe'er, I will be sure to keep the night,
If it should come so near me.> [BEATRICE *and* VERMANDERO *talk apart.*
TOM. <Alonzo.
ALON. Brother?
TOM. In troth I see small welcome in her eye.
ALON. Fie, you are too severe a censurer
Of love in all points; there's no bringing on you.
If lovers should mark everything a fault,
Affection would be like an ill-set book,
Whose faults might prove as big as half the volume.>
BEAT., *finishing her talk to her father.* That's all I do entreat.
VER. It is but reasonable;
I'll see what my son says to't.—Son Alonzo,
Here is a motion made but to reprieve
A maidenhead three days longer; the request
Is not far out of reason, for indeed
The former time is pinching.
ALON. Though my joys
Be set back so much time as I could wish
They had been forward, yet, since she desires it,
The time is set as pleasing as before;
I find no gladness wanting.
VER. May I ever
Meet it in that point still! You're nobly welcome, sirs. [*Exit with* BEATRICE.
TOM. So; did you mark the dulness of her parting now?
ALON. What dulness? Thou art so exceptious still!
TOM. Why, let it go then; I am but a fool
To mark your harms so heedfully.
ALON. Where's the oversight?
TOM. Come, your faith's cozened in her, strongly cozened.
Unsettle your affection with all speed
Wisdom can bring it to; your peace is ruined else.
Think what a torment 'tis to marry one
Whose heart is leaped into another's bosom:
If ever pleasure she receive from thee,
It comes not in thy name, or of thy gift;

[1] dragged by the ear.
[2] B, his.

She lies but with another in thine arms,
He the half-father unto all thy children
In the conception; if he get 'em not,
She helps to get 'em for him; [3] and how dangerous
And shameful her restraint may grow in time to,
It is not to be thought on without sufferings.
ALON. You speak as if she loved some other, then.
TOM. Do you apprehend so slowly?
ALON. Nay, an that
Be your fear only, I am safe enough.
Preserve your friendship and your counsel, brother,
For times of more distress; I should depart
An enemy, a dangerous, deadly one,
To any but thyself, that should but think
She knew the meaning of inconstancy,
Much less the use and practice: yet we're friends.
Pray, let no more be urged; I can endure
Much, till I meet an injury to her,
Then I am not myself. Farewell, sweet brother;
How much we're bound to Heaven to depart lovingly! [*Exit.*
TOM. Why, here is love's tame madness; thus a man
Quickly steals into his vexatiön.

SCENE II (M)

In another apartment of the castle, ALSEMERO *is waiting to see* BEATRICE, *in accordance with her appointment.* DIAPHANTA *is with him.*

DIA. The place is my charge; you have kept your hour,
And the reward of a just meeting bless you!
I hear my lady coming. Cómplete gentleman,
I dare not be too busy with my praises;
They're dangerous things to deal with. [*Exit.*
ALS. This goes well;
These women are the ladies' cabinets;
Things of most precious trust are locked into 'em.

Enter BEATRICE.

BEAT. I have within mine eye all my desires:
Requests that holy prayers ascend Heaven for,
And brings 'em down to furnish our defects,
Come not more sweet to our necessities
Than thou unto my wishes.
ALS. We're so like
In our expressions, lady, that, unless I borrow
The same words, I shall never find their equals.
BEAT. How happy were this meeting, this embrace,
If it were free from envy! [4] This poor kiss,
It has an enemy, a hateful one,
That wishes poison to't. How well were I now,
If there were none such name known as Piracquo,
Nor no such tie as the command of parents!
I should be but too much blest.
ALS. One good service
Would strike off both your fears; and I'll go near't too,
Since you are so distressed. Remove the cause,
The command ceases; so there's two fears blown out
With one and the same blast.
BEAT. Pray, let me find [5] you, sir:
What might that service be, so strangely happy?
ALS. The honorablest piece about man, valor:
I'll send a challenge to Piracquo instantly.
BEAT. How? Call you that extinguishing of fear,
When 'tis the only way to keep it flaming?
Are not you ventured in the actiön,
That's all my joys and comforts? Pray, no more, sir.
Say you prevailed, you're danger's, and not mine, then;

[3] B. inserts "in his passions."

[4] malice. [5] understand.

The law would claim you from me, or obscurity
Be made the grave to bury you alive.
I'm glad these thoughts come forth; O, keep not one
Of this condition, sir! Here was a course
Found to bring sorrow on her way to death;
The tears would ne'er ha' dried, till dust had choked 'em.
Blood-guiltiness becomes a fouler visage.
<And now I think on one; I was to blame
I ha' marred so good a market with my scorn;
'T had been done questionless: the ugliest creature
Creation framed for some use: yet to see
I could not mark so much where it should be!>

ALS. Lady!

BEAT. <Why, men of art make much of poison,
Keep one to expel another. Where was my art?>

ALS. Lady, you hear not me.

BEAT. I do especially, sir.
The present times are not so sure of our side
As those hereafter may be; but we must use 'em then
As thrifty folks their wealth, sparingly now,
Till the time opens.

ALS. You teach wisdom, lady.

BEAT., *calling*. Within there! Diaphanta!

Re-enter DIAPHANTA.

DIA. Do you call, madam?

BEAT. Perfect your service, and conduct this gentleman
The private way you brought him.

DIA. I shall, madam.

ALS. My love's as firm as love e'er built upon. [*Exit with* DIAPHANTA.

Enter DE FLORES.

DE F. <I've watched this meeting, and do wonder much
What shall become of t'other; I'm sure both
Cannot be served unless she transgress; haply
Then I'll put in for one; for, if a woman
Fly from one point, from him she makes a husband,
She spreads and mounts then like arithmetic;
One, ten, a hundred, a thousand, ten thousand,
Proves in time sutler to an army royal.
Now do I look to be most richly railed at;
Yet I must see her.>

BEAT. <Why, put case I loathed him
As much as youth and beauty hates a sepulchre,
Must I needs show it? Cannot I keep that secret,
And serve my turn upon him? See, he's here.>
De Flores.

DE F. <Ha, I shall run mad with joy!
She called me fairly by my name De Flores,
And neither "rogue" nor "rascal.">

BEAT. What ha' you done
To your face a' late? You've met with some good physician;
You've pruned[6] yourself, methinks: you were not wont
To look so amorously.[7]

DE F. Not I!
<'Tis the same physnomy, to a hair and pimple,
Which she called scurvy scarce an hour ago:
How is this?>

BEAT. Come hither; nearer, man.

DE F. <I'm up to the chin in Heaven!>

BEAT. Turn, let me see;
Faugh, 'tis but the heat of the liver, I perceive't;
I thought it had been worse.

DE F. <Her fingers touched me!
She smells all amber.>

BEAT. I'll make a water for you shall cleanse this
Within a fortnight.

DE F. With your own hands, lady?

[6] preened. [7] lovable.

BEAT. Yes, mine own, sir; in a work of cure [169
I'll trust no other.
DE F. <'Tis half an act of pleasure
To hear her talk thus to me.>
BEAT. When we're used
To a hard face, it is not so unpleasing;
It mends still in opinion, hourly mends;
I see it by experience.
DE F. <I was blest
To light upon this minute; I'll make use on't.>
BEAT. Hardness becomes the visage of a man well; [181
It argues service, resolution, manhood,
If cause were of employment.
DE F. 'Twould be soon seen
If e'er your ladyship had cause to use it;
I would but wish the honor of a service
So happy as that mounts to.
BEAT. We shall try you.
O my De Flores!
DE F. <How's that? She calls me hers [191
Already! *My* De Flores!> You were about
To sigh out somewhat, madam?
BEAT. No, was I?
I forgot,—O!—
DE F. There 'tis again, the very fellow on't.
BEAT. You are too quick, sir.
DE F. There's no excuse for't now; I heard it twice, madam; [201
That sigh would fain have utterance: take pity on't,
And lend it a free word. 'Las, how it labors
For liberty! I hear the murmur yet
Beat at your bosom.
BEAT. Would creatiön—
DE F. Ay, well said, that is it.
BEAT. Had formed me man!
DE F. Nay, that's not it. [211
BEAT. O, 'tis the soul of freedom!
I should not then be forced to marry one
I hate beyond all depths; I should have power
Then to oppose my loathings, nay, remove 'em
For ever from my sight.
DE F. <O blest occasion!>
Without change to your sex, you [220 have your wishes;
Claim so much man in me.
BEAT. In thee, De Flores?
There is small cause for that.
DE F. Put it not from me,
It is a service that I kneel for to you.
[*Kneels.*
BEAT. You are too violent to mean faithfully.
There's horror in my service, blood, and danger; [231
Can those be things to sue for?
DE F. If you knew
How sweet it were to me to be employed
In any act of yours, you would say then
I failed, and used not reverence enough
When I receive[d] the charge on't.
BEAT. <This is much,
Methinks; belike his wants are greedy; and [240
To such gold tastes like angel's food.>
[A]rise.
DE F. I'll have the work first.
BEAT. <Possible his need
Is strong upon him.> There's to encourage thee; [*Gives money.*
As thou art forward, and thy service dangerous,
Thy reward shall be precious. [249
DE F. That I've thought on;
I have assured myself of that beforehand,
And know it will be precious; the thought ravishes!
BEAT. Then take him to thy fury!
DE F. I thirst for him.
BEAT. Alonzo de Piracquo.
DE F., *rising.* His end's upon him;
He shall be seen no more.
BEAT. How lovely now
Dost thou appear to me! Never was [260 man
Dearlier rewarded.
DE F. I do think of that.
BEAT. Be wondrous careful in the execution.
DE F. Why, are not both our lives upon the cast?
BEAT. Then I throw all my fears upon thy service. [269

De F. They ne'er shall rise to hurt you.
Beat. When the deed's done,
I'll furnish thee with all things for thy flight;
Thou may'st live bravely in another country.
De F. Ay, ay;
We'll talk of that hereafter.
Beat. <I shall rid myself
Of two inveterate loathings at one time,
Piracquo and his dog-face.> [*Exit.*
De F. O my blood! [281
Methinks I feel her in mine arms already;
Her wanton fingers combing out this beard,
And, being pleased, praising this bad face.
Hunger and pleasure, they'll commend sometimes
Slovenly dishes, and feed heartily on 'em;
Nay, which is stranger, refuse dain- [290
tier for 'em:
Some women are odd feeders.—I am too loud.
Here comes the man goes supperless to bed,
Yet shall not rise to-morrow to his dinner.

Enter Alonzo.

Alon. De Flores. [299
De F. My kind, honorable lord?
Alon. I'm glad I ha' met with thee.
De F. Sir?
Alon. Thou canst show me
The full strength of the castle?
De F. That I can, sir.
Alon. I much desire it.
De F. And, if the ways and straits
Of some of the passages be not too tedious for you,
I'll assure you, worth your time and sight, my lord. [311
Alon. Pooh, that shall be no hindrance.
De F. I'm your servant, then.
'Tis now near dinner-time; 'gainst[8] your lordship's rising,
I'll have the keys about me.
Alon. Thanks, kind De Flores.
De F. <He's safely thrust upon me beyond hopes.> [*Exeunt severally.*

[8] in anticipation of.

ACT THREE

Between the acts, De Flores *is seen to enter a chamber of the castle and hide a rapier behind a door.*

Scene I (M)

De Flores *is, according to the promise, showing* Alonzo *over the castle. They are in a narrow passage which descends somewhat steeply and is rather low-roofed.*

De Flores. Yes, here are all the keys; I was afraid, my lord,
I'd wanted for the postern; this is it:
I've all, I've all, my lord: this for the sconce. [10
Alon. 'Tis a most spacious and impregnable fort.
De F. You'll tell me more, my lord. This descent
Is somewhat narrow, we shall never pass
Well with our weapons, they'll but trouble us.
Alon. Thou sayest true.
De F. Pray, let me help your lordship. [*Takes off* Alonzo's *sword.*
Alon. 'Tis done: thanks, kind De [21
Flores.
De F. Here are hooks, my lord,
To hang such things on purpose. [*Hangs up his own sword and that of* Alonzo.
Alon. Lead, I'll follow thee. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II (M)

Alonzo *and* De Flores *enter the chamber in which* De Flores *has concealed the rapier.*

De F. All this is nothing; you shall see anon
A place you little dream on.
Alon. I am glad
I have this leisure; all your master's house
Imagine I ha' taken a gondola. [10
De F. All but myself, sir; <which makes up my safety.>
My lord, I'll place you at a casement here
Will show you the full strength of all the castle. [*Takes him to a casement, and points out.*

Look, spend your eye awhile upon that object.

ALON. Here's rich variety, De Flores.

DE F. Yes, sir. [20

ALON. Goodly munition.

DE F. Aye, there's ordnance, sir,
No bastard metal, will ring you a peal like bells
At great men's funerals. Keep your eye straight, my lord;
Take special notice of that sconce before you;
There you may dwell awhile. [*Takes the rapier which he had hid behind the door.* [31

ALON. I am upon't.

DE F. And so am I. [*Stabs him.*

ALON. De Flores! O De Flores!
Whose malice hast thou put on?

DE F. Do you question
A work of secrecy? I must silence you. [*Stabs him.*

ALON. O, O, O! [39

DE F. I must silence you. [*Stabs him.*
So, here's an undertaking well accomplished!
This vault serves to good use now. Ha, what's that
Threw sparkles in my eye? O, 'tis a diamond
He wears upon his finger; 'twas well found;
This will approve[1] the work. What, so fast on? [50
Not part in death? I'll take a speedy course then.
Finger and all shall off. [*Cuts off the finger.*] So, now I'll clear
The passages from all suspect or fear. [*Exit with body.*

SCENE III (R)

ISABELLA *finds herself tied very closely to part of her husband's house, and wants to know from* LOLLIO *whether, in confining her so strictly, he is acting on the instructions of* ALIBIUS. *The room in which they speak has a gallery above it.*

ISA. Why, sirrah, whence have you commission
To fetter the doors against me?

[1] give proof of.

If you keep me in a cage, pray, whistle to me: [11
Let me be doing something.

LOL. You shall be doing, if it please you;
I'll whistle to you, if you'll pipe after.

ISA. Is it your master's pleasure, or your own,
To keep me in this pinfold?

LOL. 'Tis for my master's pleasure, lest, being taken in another man's corn, you might be pounded in another place. [21

ISA. 'Tis very well, and he'll prove very wise.

LOL. He says you have company enough in the house, if you please to be sociable, of all sorts of people.

ISA. Of all sorts? Why, here's none but fools and madmen.

LOL. Very well: and where will you find any other, if you should go abroad? There's my master, and I to boot too. [31

ISA. Of either sort one, a madman and a fool.

LOL. I would ev'n participate of both then, if I were as you; I know you're half mad already, be half foolish too.

ISA. You're a brave saucy rascal! Come on, sir,
Afford me then the pleasure of your bedlam. [40
You were commending once to-day to me
Your last-come lunatic; what a proper[2]
Body there was, without brains to guide it,
And what a pitiful delight appeared
In that defect, as if your wisdom had found
A mirth in madness; pray, sir, let me partake,
If there be such a pleasure. [50

LOL. If I do not show you the handsomest, discreetest madman, one that I may call the understanding madman, then say I am a fool.

ISA. Well, a match; I will say so.

LOL. When you have [had] a taste of the madman, you shall, if you please, see Fool's College, o' th' [other] side. I seldom lock there; 'tis but shooting a bolt or two, and you are amongst 'em. [60

[2] handsome.

[*Exit. Re-enters a few moments later, bringing in* Franciscus.]—Come on, sir; let me see how handsomely you'll behave yourself now.

Enter Franciscus.

Fran. How sweetly she looks! O, but there's a wrinkle in her brow as deep as philosophy. Anacreon, drink to my mistress' health, I'll pledge it. Stay, stay, there's a spider in the cup! No, 'tis but a grape-stone; swallow it, fear nothing, poet; so, so, lift higher. [72

Isa. Alack, alack, it is too full of pity
To be laughed at! How fell he mad?
Canst thou tell?

Lol. For love, mistress. He was a pretty poet, too, and that set him forwards first; the muses then forsook him; he ran mad for a chambermaid; yet she was but a dwarf neither. [80

Fran. Hail, bright Titania!
Why stand'st thou idle on these flowery banks?
Oberon is dancing with his Dryades;
I'll gather daisies, primrose, violets,
And bind them in a verse of poesy.

Lol., *holding up a whip*. Not too near! You see your danger.

Fran. O, hold thy hand, great Diomede! [90
Thou feed'st thy horses well; they shall obey thee:
Get up; Bucephalus kneels. [*Kneels.*

Lol. You see how I awe my flock; a shepherd has not his dog at more obedience.

Isa. His conscience is unquiet; sure that was
The cause of this: a proper gentleman!

Fran. Come hither, Æsculapius; hide the poison. [101

Lol. Well, 'tis hid. [*Hides the whip.*

Fran. Didst thou ne'er hear of one Tiresias,
A famous poet?

Lol. Yes, that kept tame wild geese.

Fran. That's he; I am the man.

Lol. No?

Fran. Yes; but make no words on't. I was a man [110
Seven years ago.

Lol. A stripling, I think, you might.

Fran. Now I'm a woman, all feminine.

Lol. I would I might see that!

Fran. Juno struck me blind.

Lol. I'll ne'er believe that; for a woman, they say, has an eye more than a man.

Fran. I say she struck me blind.

Lol. And Luna made you mad: you have two trades to beg with. [121

Fran. Luna is now big-bellied, and there's room
For both of us to ride with Hecate;
I'll drag thee up into her silver sphere,
And there we'll kick the dog—and beat the bush—
That barks against the witches of the night;
The swift lycanthropi that walks the [130 round;
We'll tear their wolvish skins, and save the sheep. [*Attempts to seize* Lollio.

Lol. Is't come to this? Nay, then, my poison comes forth again. [*Showing the whip.*] Mad slave, indeed! abuse your keeper!

Isa. I prithee, hence with him, now he grows dangerous. [140

Fran., *singing*.

Sweet love, pity me,
Give me leave to lie with thee.

Lol. No, I'll see you wiser first. To your own kennel!

Fran. No noise, she sleeps; draw all the curtains round,
Let no soft sound molest the pretty soul
But love; and love creeps in at a mouse-hole. [150

Lol. I would you would get into your hole! [*Exit* Franciscus.]—Now, mistress, I will bring you another sort; you shall be fooled another while. [*Exit, and brings in* Antonio.]—Tony, come hither, Tony: look who's yonder, Tony.

Ant. Cousin, is it not my aunt?[3]

Lol. Yes, 'tis one of 'em, Tony.

Ant. He, he! how do you, uncle?

Lol. Fear him not, mistress, 'tis a [160

[3] bawd.

gentle nigget;[4] you may play with him, as safely with him as with his bauble.

Isa. How long hast thou been a fool?

Ant. Ever since I came hither, cousin.

Isa. Cousin? I'm none of thy cousins, fool.

Lol. O, mistress, fools have always so much wit as to claim their kindred.

Madman, *within*. Bounce, bounce! he falls, he falls! [170

Isa. Hark you, your scholars in the upper room
Are out of order.

Lol. Must I come amongst you there?—Keep you the fool, mistress; I'll go up and play left-handed Orlando amongst the madmen. [*Exit.*

Isa. Well, sir.

Ant., *throwing off his appearance of idiocy*. 'Tis opportuneful now, sweet lady!—Nay, [181
Cast no amazing eye upon this change.

Isa. Ha!

Ant. This shape of folly shrouds your dearest love,
The truest servant to your powerful beauties,
Whose magic had this force thus to transform me.

Isa. You're a fine fool indeed! [190

Ant. O, 'tis not strange!
Love has an intellect that runs through all
The scrutinous sciences; and, like a cunning poet,
Catches a quantity of every knowledge,
Yet brings all home into one mystery,
Into one secret that he proceeds in.

Isa. You're a parlous fool.

Ant. No danger in me; I bring nought but love [201
And his soft-wounding shafts to strike you with.
Try but one arrow; if it hurt you, I
Will stand you twenty back in recompense. [*Kisses her.*

Isa. A forward fool too!

Ant. This was love's teaching:
A thousand ways he[5] fashioned out my way, [210
And this I found the safest and the nearest,
To tread the galaxia to my star.

Isa. Profound withal! certain you dreamed of this;
Love never taught it waking.

Ant. Take no acquaintance
Of these outward follies, there's within
A gentleman that loves you. [219

Isa. When I see him,
I'll speak with him; so, in the meantime, keep
Your habit, it becomes you well enough.
As you're a gentleman, I'll not discover you;
That's all the favor that you must expect.
When you are weary, you may leave the school,
For all this while you have but played the fool. [230

Re-enter Lollio.

Ant. And must again.—He, he! I thank you, cousin;
I'll be your valentine to-morrow morning.

Lol. How do you like the fool, mistress?

Isa. Passing well, sir.

Lol. Is he not witty, pretty well, for a fool?

Isa. If he holds on as he begins, he's like [241
To come to something.

Lol. Ay, thank a good tutor. You may put him to't; he begins to answer pretty hard questions.—Tony, how many is five times six?

Ant. Five times six is six times five.

Lol. What arithmetician could have answered better? How many is one hundred and seven? [251

Ant. One hundred and seven is seven hundred and one, cousin.

Lol. This is no wit to speak on!—Will you be rid of the fool now?

Isa. By no means; let him stay a little.

Madman, *within*. Catch there, catch the last couple in hell![6]

Lol. Again! must I come amongst you? Would my master were come home! I

[4] idiot. [5] B, she.

[6] An allusion to the game of barley-break.

am not able to govern both these wards together. *Exit.* [261

ANT. Why should a minute of love's hour be lost?

ISA. Fie, out again! I had rather you kept
Your other posture; you become not your tongue
When you speak from your clothes.

ANT. How can he freeze
Lives near so sweet a warmth? Shall I alone [271
Walk through the orchard of th' Hesperides,
And, cowardly, not dare to pull an apple?

Enter LOLLIO *above.*

This with the red cheeks I must venture for. [*Attempts to kiss her.*

ISA. Take heed; there's giants keep 'em. [279

LOL. <How now, fool, are you good at that? Have you read Lipsius? He's past *"Ars Amandi"*; I believe I must put harder questions to him; I perceive that.>

ISA. You're bold without fear too.

ANT. What should I fear,
Having all joys about me? Do you [but] smile,
And love shall play the wanton on your lip, [290
Meet and retire, retire and meet again;
Look you but cheerfully, and in your eyes
I shall behold mine own deformity,
And dress myself up fairer. I know this shape
Becomes me not, but in those bright mirrors
I shall array me handsomely. [*Cries of madmen are heard within, like those of birds and beasts.* [301

LOL. <Cuckoo, cuckoo!> [*Exit above.*

ANT. What are these?

ISA. Of fear enough to part us;
Yet are they but our schools of lunatics,
That act their fantasies in any shapes,
Suiting their present thoughts: if sad, they cry;
If mirth be their conceit, they laugh again: [310
Sometimes they imitate the beasts and birds,
Singing or howling, braying, barking; all,
As their wild fancies prompt 'em.

ANT. These are no fears.

Enter LOLLIO.

ISA. But here's a large one, my man.

ANT. Ha, he! that's fine sport, indeed, cousin. [319

LOL. I would my master were come home! 'Tis too much for one shepherd to govern two of these flocks; nor can I believe that one churchman can instruct two benefices at once; there will be some incurable mad of the one side, and very fools on the other.—Come, Tony.

ANT. Prithee, cousin, let me stay here still.

LOL. No, you must to your book now; you have played sufficiently. [330

ISA. Your fool has grown wondrous witty.

LOL. Well, I'll say nothing; but I do not think but he will put you down one of these days. [*Exit, with* ANTONIO.

ISA. Here the restrainëd current might make breach,
Spite of the watchful bankers. Would a woman stray, [339
She need not gad abroad to seek her sin,
It would be brought home one ways or other:
The needle's point will to the fixëd north;
Such drawing arctics women's beauties are.

Re-enter LOLLIO.

LOL. How dost thou, sweet rogue?

ISA. How now?

LOL. Come, there are degrees; one fool may be better than another. [350

ISA. What's the matter?

LOL. Nay, if thou givest thy mind to fool's flesh, have at thee!

ISA. You bold slave, you!

LOL. I could follow now as t'other fool did:
"What should I fear,

Having all joys about me? Do you but smile,
And love shall play the wanton on your lip,
Meet and retire, retire and meet again;
Look you but cheerfully, and in your eyes
I shall behold my own deformity,
And dress myself up fairer. I know this shape
Becomes me not:—"
And so as it follows: but is not this the most foolish way? Come, sweet rogue; kiss me, my little Lacedæmonian; let me feel how thy pulses beat. Thou hast a thing about thee would do a man pleasure, I'll lay my hand on't.

ISA. Sirrah, no more! I see you have discovered
This love's knight errant, who hath made adventure
For purchase of my love: be silent, mute,
Mute as a statue, or his injunction
For me enjoying, shall be to cut thy throat;
I'll do it, though for no other purpose; and
Be sure he'll not refuse it.

LOL. My share, that's all;
I'll have my fool's part with you.

ISA. No more! Your master.

Enter ALIBIUS.

ALIB. Sweet, how dost thou?

ISA. Your bounden servant, sir.

ALIB. Fie, fie, sweetheart, no more of that.

ISA. You were best lock me up.

ALIB. In my arms and bosom, my sweet Isabella,
I'll lock thee up most nearly.—Lollio,
We have employment, we have task in hand.
At noble Vermandero's, our castle's captain,
There is a nuptial to be solemnized—
Beatrice Joanna, his fair daughter, bride—
For which the gentleman hath bespoke our pains,
A mixture of our madmen and our fools,
To finish, as it were, and make the fag[7]
Of all the revels, the third night from the first;
Only an unexpected passage over,
To make a frightful pleasure, that is all,
But not the all I aim at. Could we so act it,
To teach it in a wild, distracted measure,
Though out of form and figure, breaking time's head,
It were no matter, 'twould be healed again
In one age or other, if not in this:
This, this, Lollio, there's a good reward begun,
And will beget a bounty, be it known.

LOL. This is easy, sir, I'll warrant you: you have about you fools and madmen that can dance very well; and 'tis no wonder your best dancers are not the wisest men; the reason is, with often jumping they jolt their brains down into their feet, that their wits lie more in their heels than in their heads.

ALIB. Honest Lollio, thou giv'st me a good reason,
And a comfort in it.

ISA. You've a fine trade on't.
Madmen and fools are a staple commodity.

ALIB. O wife, we must eat, wear clothes, and live.
Just at the lawyer's haven we arrive;
By madmen and by fools we both do thrive. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV (M)

VERMANDERO, BEATRICE, ALSEMERO, *and* JASPERINO *are in a room in the castle.* BEATRICE *has contrived to get* ALSEMERO *into her father's favor.*

VER. Valencia speaks so nobly of you, sir,
I wish I had a daughter now for you.

ALS. The fellow of this creature were a partner
For a king's love.

VER. I had her fellow once, sir;
But Heaven has married her to joys eternal;
'Twere sin to wish her in this vale again.
Come, sir, your friend and you shall see the pleasures

[7] finish.

Which my health chiefly joys in.
ALS. I hear
The beauty of this seat largely [commended]. [20
VER. It falls much short of that. [*Exit with* ALSEMERO *and* JASPERINO.
BEAT. So, here's one step
Into my father's favor; time will fix him;
I've got him now the liberty of the house.
So wisdom, by degrees, works out her freedom;
And, if that eye be darkened that offends me— [29
I wait but that eclipse—this gentleman
Shall soon shine glorious in my father's liking,
Through the refulgent virtue of my love.

Enter DE FLORES.

DE F. <My thoughts are at a banquet; for the deed,
I feel no weight in't; 'tis but light and cheap
For the sweet recompense that I set down for't.> [40
BEAT. De Flores?
DE F. Lady?
BEAT. Thy looks promise cheerfully.
DE F. All things are answerable, time, circumstance,
Your wishes, and my service.
BEAT. Is it done, then?
DE F. Piracquo is no more.
BEAT. My joys start at mine eyes; our sweet'st delights [50
Are evermore born weeping.
DE F. I've a token for you.
BEAT. For me?
DE F. But it was sent somewhat unwillingly;
I could not get the ring without the finger. [*Produces the finger and ring.*
BEAT. Bless me! what hast thou done?
DE F. Why, is that more
Than killing the whole man? I cut his heart-strings; [62
A greedy hand thrust in a dish at court,
In a mistake hath had as much as this.
BEAT. 'Tis the first token my father made me send him.
DE F. And I [have] made him send it back again
For his last token. I was loth to leave it; [70
And I'm sure dead men have no use of jewels;
He was as loth to part with't, for it stuck
As if the flesh and it were both one substance.
BEAT. At the stag's fall, the keeper has his fees:
'Tis soon applied; all dead men's fees are yours, sir. [80
I pray, bury the finger, but the stone
You may make use on shortly; the true value,
Take't of my truth, is near three hundred ducats.
DE F. 'Twill hardly buy a capcase for one's conscience though,
To keep it from the worm, as fine as 'tis.
Well, being my fees, I'll take it;
Great men have taught me that, or else my merit [91
Would scorn the way on't.
BEAT. It might justly, sir.
Why, thou mistak'st, De Flores; 'tis not given
In state of recompense.[8]
DE F. No, I hope so, lady;
You should soon witness my contempt to't then.
BEAT. Prithee, thou look'st as if thou wert offended. [101
DE F. That were strange, lady; 'tis not possible
My service should draw such a cause from you.
Offended! Could you think so? That were much
For one of my performance, and so warm [109
Yet in my service.
BEAT. 'Twere misery in me to give you cause, sir.
DE F. I know so much, it were so; misery
In her most sharp condition.
BEAT. 'Tis resolved then.

[8] given as recompense. It has been suggested that "in state" may be an error for "instead."

Look you, sir, here's three thousand golden florins;
I have not meanly thought upon thy merit.
DE F. What! salary? Now you move me.
BEAT. How, De Flores?
DE F. Do you place me in the rank of verminous fellows,
To destroy things for wages? Offer gold
For the life-blood of man? Is anything
Valued too precious for my recompense?
BEAT. I understand thee not.
DE F. I could ha' hired
A journeyman in murder at this rate,
And mine own conscience might have [slept at ease],
And have had the work brought home.
BEAT. <I'm in a labyrinth;
What will content him? I'd fain be rid of him.>
I'll double the sum, sir.
DE F. You take a course
To double my vexation; that's the good you do.
BEAT. <Bless me, I'm now in worse plight than I was;
I know not what will please him.> For my fear's sake,
I prithee, make away with all speed possible;
And if thou be'st so modest not to name
The sum that will content thee, paper blushes not;
Send thy demand in writing, it shall follow thee;
But, prithee, take thy flight.
DE F. You must fly too, then.
BEAT. I?
DE F. I'll not stir a foot else.
BEAT. What's your meaning?
DE F. Why, are not you as guilty? In, I'm sure,
As deep as I; and we should stick together.
Come, your fears counsel you but ill; my absence
Would draw suspect upon you instantly;
There were no rescue for you.
BEAT. <He speaks home!>
DE F. Nor is it fit we two, engaged so jointly,
Should part and live asunder.
BEAT. How now, sir?
This shows not well.
DE F. What makes your lip so strange?
This must not be betwixt us.
BEAT. <The man talks wildly!>
DE F. Come, kiss me with a zeal now.
BEAT. <Heaven, I doubt him!>
DE F. I will not stand so long to beg 'em shortly.
BEAT. Take heed, De Flores, of forgetfulness;
'Twill soon betray us.
DE F. Take you heed first;
Faith, you're grown much forgetful; you're to blame in't.
BEAT. <He's bold; and I am blamed for't.>
DE F. I have eased you
Of your trouble; think on't; I'm in pain,
And must be eased of you; 'tis a charity;
Justice invites your blood to understand me.
BEAT. I dare not.
DE F. Quickly!
BEAT. O, I never shall!
Speak it yet further off, that I may lose
What has been spoken, and no sound remain on't;
I would not hear so much offence again
For such another deed.
DE F. Soft, lady, soft!
The last is not yet paid for. O, this act
Has put me into spirit; I was as greedy on't
As the parched earth of moisture, when the clouds weep.
Did you not mark, I wrought myself into't,
Nay, sued and kneeled for't? Why was all that pains took?
You see I've thrown contempt upon your gold;
Not that I want it [not], for I do piteously,
In order I'll come unto't, and make use on't;

But 'twas not held so precious to begin with,
For I place wealth after the heels of pleasure;
And were not I resolved in my belief
That thy virginity were perfect in thee,
I should but take my recompense with grudging,
As if I had but half my hopes I agreed for.
BEAT. Why, 'tis impossible thou canst be so wicked,
Or shelter such a cunning cruelty,
To make his death the murderer of my honor!
Thy language is so bold and viciöus,
I cannot see which way I can forgive it
With any modesty.
DE F. Push! you forget yourself;
A woman dipped in blood, and talk of modesty!
BEAT. O misery of sin! would I'd been bound
Perpetually unto my living hate
In that Piracquo, than to hear these words!
Think but upon the distance that creation
Set 'twixt thy blood and mine, and keep thee there.
DE F. Look but into your conscience; read me there;
'Tis a true book; you'll find me there your equal.
Push! fly not to your birth, but settle you
In what the act has made you; you're no more now.
You must forget your parentage to me;
You're the deed's creature; by that name
You lost your first condition, and I challenge you,
As peace and innocency has turned you out,
And made you one with me.
BEAT. With thee, foul villain!
DE F. Yes, my fair murd'ress. Do you urge me,
Though thou writ'st maid, thou whore in thy affection?
'Twas changed from thy first love; and that's a kind
Of whoredom in thy heart; and he's changed now
To bring thy second on, thy Alsemero,
Whom, by all sweets that ever darkness tasted,
If I enjoy thee not, thou ne'er enjoy'st!
I'll blast the hopes and joys of marriäge;
I'll confess all; my life I rate at nothing.
BEAT. De Flores!
DE F. I shall rest from all love's[9] plagues then;
I live in pain now; that [love-] shooting eye
Will burn my heart to cinders.
BEAT. O sir, hear me!
DE F. She that in life and love refuses me,
In death and shame my partner she shall be.
BEAT., *kneeling*. Stay; hear me once for all; I make thee master
Of all the wealth I have in gold and jewels;
Let me go poor unto my bed with honor,
And I am rich in all things!
DE F. Let this silence thee:
The wealth of all Valencia shall not buy
My pleasure from me;
Can you weep Fate from its determined purpose?
So soon may [you] weep me.
BEA. <Vengeance begins;
Murder, I see, is followed by more sins.
Was my creation in the womb so curst,
It must engender with a viper first?>
DE F., *raising her*. Come, rise, and shroud your blushes in my bosom;
Silence is one of pleasure's best receipts:
Thy peace is wrought for ever in this yielding.
'Las! how the turtle pants! Thou'lt love anon
What thou so fear'st and faint'st to venture on. [*Exeunt.*

[9] B, lovers.

ACT FOUR

Dumb Show.

Enter Gentlemen, Vermandero *meeting them with action of wonderment at the flight of* Piracquo. *Enter* Alsemero *with* Jasperino *and gallants:* Vermandero *points to him, the gentlemen seeming to applaud the choice. They pass over in great solemnity.* Beatrice, *the bride, follows in great state, accompanied by* Diaphanta, Isabella, *and other gentlewomen;* De Flores *after all, smiling at the accident.* Alonzo's *ghost appears to* De Flores *in the midst of his smile, startles him, showing him the hand whose finger he had cut off.*

Scene I (M)

A room in the castle. Beatrice, *newly-wedded to* Alsemero, *looks forward with terror to the night, fearing that the bridegroom will discover the loss of her virginity.*

Beat. This fellow has undone me endlessly;
Never was bride so fearfully distressed.
The more I think upon th' ensuing night,
And whom I am to cope with in embraces, [11
One [who's] ennobled both in blood and mind,
So clear in understanding—that's my plague now—
Before whose judgment will my fault appear
Like malefactors' crimes before tribunals.
There is no hiding on't, the more I dive
Into my own distress. How a wise man
Stands for a great calamity! There's no venturing [22
Into his bed, what course soe'er I light upon,
Without my shame, which may grow up to danger.
He cannot but in justice strangle me
As I lie by him; as a cheater use me;
'Tis a precious craft to play with a false die [30
Before a cunning gamester. Here's his closet;
The key left in't, and he abroad i' th' park!
Sure 'twas forgot; I'll be so bold as look in't. [*Opens closet.*
Bless me! a right physician's closet 'tis,
Set round with vials; every one her mark too.
Sure he does practise physic for his own use, [41
Which may be safely called your great man's wisdom.
What manuscript lies here? "The Book of Experiment,
Called Secrets in Nature." So 'tis: 'tis so.
"How to know whether a woman be with child or no."
I hope I am not yet; if he should try though! [51
Let me see. "Folio forty-five;" here 'tis,
The leaf tucked down upon't, the place suspicious.
"If you would know whether a woman be with child or not, give her two spoonfuls of the white water in glass C—"
Where's that glass C? O yonder, I see't now— [59
"and, if she be with child, she sleeps full twelve hours after; if not, not:"
None of that water comes into my belly;
I'll know you from a hundred; I could break you now,
Or turn you into milk, and so beguile
The master of the mystery; but I'll look to you.
Ha! that which is next is ten times worse:
"How to know whether a woman be a [70 maid or not:"
If that should be applied, what would become of me?
Belike he has a strong faith of my purity,
That never yet made proof; but this he calls
"A merry slight, but true experiment; the author Antonius Mizaldus. Give the party you suspect the quantity of a [79 spoonful of the water in the glass M, which, upon her that is a maid, makes three several effects; 'twill make her incontinently gape, then fall into a sudden

sneezing, last into a violent laughing; else, dull, heavy, and lumpish."
Where had I been?
I fear it, yet 'tis seven hours to bed-time.

Enter DIAPHANTA.

DIA. Cuds, madam, are you here? [90
BEAT. <Seeing that wench now,
A trick comes in my mind; 'tis a nice piece
Gold cannot purchase.> I come hither, wench,
To look my lord.
DIA. Would I had such a cause
To look him too!—Why, he's i' th' park, madam. [99
BEAT. There let him be.
DIA. Ay, madam, let him compass
Whole parks and forests, as great rangers do,
At roosting-time a little lodge can hold 'em.
Earth-conquering Alexander, that thought the world
Too narrow for him, in th' end had but his pit-hole. [109
BEAT. I fear thou art not modest, Diaphanta.
DIA. Your thoughts are so unwilling to be known, madam.
'Tis ever the bride's fashion, towards bed-time,
To set light by her joys, as if she owed[1] 'em not.
BEAT. Her joys? Her fears thou wouldst say.
DIA. Fear of what? [120
BEAT. Art thou a maid, and talk'st so to a maid?
You leave a blushing business behind;
Beshrew your heart for't!
DIA. Do you mean good sooth, madam?
BEAT. Well, if I'd thought upon the fear at first,
Man should have been unknown.
DIA. Is't possible? [130
BEAT. I'd[2] give a thousand ducats to that woman
Would try what my fear were, and tell me true
To-morrow, when she gets from't; as she likes,
I might perhaps be drawn to't.
DIA. Are you in earnest?
BEAT. Do you get the woman, then challenge me, [140
And see if I'll fly from't; but I must tell you
This by the way, she must be a true maid.
Else there's no trial; my fears are not hers else.
DIA. Nay, she that I would put into your hands, madam,
Shall be a maid.
BEAT. You know I should be shamed else, [151
Because she lies for me.
DIA. 'Tis a strange humor!
But are you serious still? Would you resign
Your first night's pleasure, and give money too?
BEAT. As willingly as live. <Alas, the gold [159
Is but a by-bet to wedge in the honor!>
DIA. I do not know how the world goes abroad
For faith or honesty; there's both required in this.
Madam, what say you to me, and stray no further?
I've a good mind, in troth, to earn your money.
BEAT. You are too quick, I fear, to be a maid. [170
DIA. How? Not a maid? Nay, then you urge me, madam;
Your honorable self is not a truer,
With all your fears upon you—
BEAT. <Bad enough then.>
DIA. Than I with all my lightsome joys about me.
BEAT. I'm glad to hear't. Then you dare put your honesty[3]
Upon an easy trial. [180
DIA. Easy? Anything.
BEAT. I'll come to you straight. [*Goes to the closet.*

[1] owned. [2] B, I will. [3] chastity.

DIA. <She will not search me, will she,
Like the forewoman of a female jury?>
BEAT. Glass M: ay, this is it. [*Brings vial.*] Look, Diaphanta,
You take no worse than I do. [*Drinks.*
DIA. And, in so doing, [190
I will not question what it is, but take it. [*Drinks.*
BEAT. <Now if th' experiment be true, 'twill praise itself,
And give me noble ease: begins already; [DIAPHANTA *gapes.*
There's the first symptom; and what haste it makes
To fall into the second! there by this time! [DIAPHANTA *sneezes.* [200
Most admirable secret! on the contrary,
It stirs not me a whit, which most concerns it.>
DIA. Ha, ha, ha!
BEAT. <Just in all things, and in order
As if 'twere circumscribed; one accident[4]
Gives way unto another.>
DIA. Ha, ha, ha!
BEAT. How now, wench? [210
DIA. Ha, ha, ha! I'm so, so light
At heart—ha, ha, ha!—so pleasurable!
But one swig more, sweet madam.
BEAT. Ay, to-morrow,
We shall have time to sit by't.
DIA. Now I'm sad again.
BEAT. <It lays itself so gently too!> Come, wench.
Most honest Diaphanta I dare call thee now. [220
DIA. Pray, tell me, madam, what trick call you this?
BEAT. I'll tell thee all hereafter; we must study
The carriage of this business.
DIA. I shall carry't well,
Because I love the burthen.
BEAT. About midnight
You must not fail to steal forth gently,
That I may use the place. [230
DIA. O, fear not, madam,
I shall be cool by that time. The bride's place,
And with a thousand ducats! I'm for a justice now;
I bring a portion with me; I scorn small fools. [*Exeunt.*

[4] symptom.

SCENE II (R, M)[5]

TOMASO *has been worrying* VERMANDERO *about his lost brother, and* VERMANDERO *is determined to take action. He is now talking to a* SERVANT *in one of the rooms of the castle.*

VER. I tell thee, knave, mine honor is in question,
A thing till now free from suspiciön;
Nor ever was there cause. Who of my gentlemen [10
Are absent? Tell me, and truly, how many, and who?
SER. Antonio, sir, and Franciscus.
VER. When did they leave the castle?
SER. Some ten days since, sir; the one intending to
Briamata, th' other for Valencia.
VER. The time accuses 'em; a charge of murder
Is brought within my castle-gate, [20
Piracquo's murder;
I dare not answer faithfully their absence.
A strict command of apprehensiön
Shall pursue 'em suddenly, and either wipe
The stain off clear, or openly discover it.
Provide me wingëd warrants for the purpose. [*Exit* SERVANT.
See, I am set on again. [30

Enter TOMASO.

TOM. I claim a brother of you.
VER. You're too hot;
Seek him not here.
TOM. Yes, 'mongst your dearest bloods,
If my peace find no fairer satisfaction.
This is the place must yield account for him, [39
For here I left him; and the hasty tie
Of this snatched marriage gives strong testimony
Of his most certain ruin.

[5] Rowley's part ends with the servant's exit. Middleton's begins there.

VER. Certain falsehood!
This is the place indeed; his breach of faith
Has too much marred both my abusëd love,
The honorable love I reserved for him,
And mocked my daughter's joy; the prepared morning [51
Blushed at his infidelity; he left
Contempt and scorn to throw upon those friends
Whose belief hurt 'em. O, 'twas most ignoble
To take his flight so unexpectedly,
And throw such public wrongs on those that loved him! [59
TOM. Then this is all your answer?
VER. 'Tis too fair
For one of his alliance; and I warn you
That this place no more see you. [*Exit.*

Enter DE FLORES.

TOM. The best is,
There is more ground to meet a man's revenge on.—
Honest De Flores?
DE F. That's my name indeed.
Saw you the bride? Good sweet sir, [70 which way took she?
TOM. I've blessed mine eyes from seeing such a false one.
DE F. <I'd fain get off, this man's not for my company;
I smell his brother's blood when I come near him.>
TOM. Come hither, kind and true one; I remember
My brother loved thee well. [80
DE F. O, purely, dear sir!—
<Methinks I'm now again a-killing on him,
He brings it so fresh to me.>
TOM. Thou canst guess, sirrah,
An[6] honest friend has an instinct of jealousy
At some foul guilty person.
DE F. Alas! sir,
I am so charitable, I think none [90
Worse than myself! You did not see the bride then?

[6] B, one.

TOM. I prithee, name her not: is she not wicked?
DE F. No, no; a pretty, easy, round-packed sinner,
As your most ladies are, else you might think
I flattered her; but, sir, at no hand wicked, [100
Till they're so old their chins and noses[7] meet,
And they salute witches. I'm called, I think, sir.—
<His company even overlays my conscience.> [*Exit.*
TOM. That De Flores has a wondrous honest heart!
He'll bring it out in time, I am assured on't. [110
O, here's the glorious master of the day's joy!
'T[8] will not be long till he and I do reckon.—

Enter ALSEMERO.

Sir.
ALS. You're most welcome.
TOM. You may call that word back; I do not think I am, nor wish to be.
ALS. 'Tis strange you found the way to this house, then. [121
TOM. Would I'd ne'er known the cause! I'm none of those, sir,
That come to give you joy, and swill your wine;
'Tis a more precious liquor that must lay
The fiery thirst I bring.
ALS. Your words and you
Appear to me great strangers. [129
TOM. Time and our swords
May make us more acquainted. This the business:
I should have had a brother in your place;
How treachery and malice have disposed of him
I'm bound to inquire of him which holds his right,
Which never could come fairly.
ALS. You must look
To answer for that word, sir. [141
TOM. Fear you not,

[7] B, vices. [8] B, I.

I'll have it ready drawn at our next meeting.
Keep your day solemn;[9] farewell, I disturb it not;
I'll bear the smart with patience for a time. [*Exit.*
ALS. 'Tis somewhat ominous this; a quarrel entered [150
Upon this day; my innocence relieves me;

Enter JASPERINO.

I should be wondrous sad else.—Jasperino,
I've news to tell thee, strange news.
JASP. I ha' some too,
I think as strange as yours. Would I might keep
Mine, so my faith and friendship might be kept in't! [161
Faith, sir, dispense a little with my zeal,
And let it cool in this.
ALS. This puts me on,
And blames thee for thy slowness.
JAS. All may prove nothing,
Only a friendly fear that leapt from me, sir.
ALS. No question, 't may prove nothing; let's partake it though. [170
JAS. 'Twas Diaphanta's chance—for to that wench
I pretend[10] honest love, and she deserves it—
To leave me in a back part of the house,
A place we chose for private conference.
She was no sooner gone, but instantly
I heard your bride's voice in the next room to me,
And, lending more attention, found De Flores [181
Louder than she.
ALS. De Flores! Thou art out now.
JAS. You'll tell me more anon.
ALS. Still I'll prevent[11] thee;
The very sight of him is poison to her.
JAS. That made me stagger too; but Diaphanta
At her return confirmed it.
ALS. Diaphanta! [190

[9] celebrate your wedding day.
[10] profess. [11] anticipate.

JAS. Then fell we both to listen, and words passed
Like those that challenge interest in a woman.
ALS. Peace: quench thy zeal, 'tis dangerous to thy bosom.
JAS. Then truth is full of peril.
ALS. Such truths are.
O, were she the sole glory of the earth,
Had eyes that could shoot fire into king's breasts, [201
And touched,[12] she sleeps not here! Yet I have time,
Though night be near, to be resolved hereof;
And, prithee, do not weigh me by my passions.
JAS. I never weighed friend so.
ALS. Done charitably! [209
That key will lead thee to a pretty secret, [*Gives key.*
By a Chaldean taught me, and I have
My study upon some. Bring from my closet
A glass inscribed there with the letter M,
And question not my purpose.
JAS. It shall be done, sir. [*Exit.*
ALS. How can this hang together? Not an hour since
Her woman came pleading her lady's [220 fears,
Delivered her for the most timorous virgin
That ever shrunk at man's name, and so modest
She charged her weep out her request to me,
That she might come obscurely to my bosom. [229

Enter BEATRICE.

BEAT. <All things go well; my woman's preparing yonder
For her sweet voyage, which grieves me to lose;
Necessity compels it; I lose all, else.>
ALS. <Push! modesty's shrine is set in yonder forehead:
I cannot be too sure though.> My Joanna!

[12] tainted.

BEAT. Sir, I was bold to weep a message to you;
Pardon my modest fears.
ALS. The dove's not meeker;
<She's abused, questionless.>

Re-enter JASPERINO, *with vial.*

O, are you come, sir?
BEAT. <The glass, upon my life! I see the letter.>
JAS. Sir, this is M.
ALS. 'Tis it.
BEAT. <I am suspected.>
ALS. How fitly our bride comes to partake with us!
BEAT. What is't, my lord?
ALS. No hurt.
BEAT. Sir, pardon me,
I seldom taste of any composition.
ALS. But this, upon my warrant, you shall venture on.
BEAT. I fear 'twill make me ill.
ALS. Heaven forbid that!
BEAT. <I'm put now to my cunning: th' effects I know,
If I can now but feign 'em handsomely.>
[*Drinks.*
ALS. <It has that secret virtue, it ne'er missed, sir,
Upon a virgin.
JAS. Treble-qualitied?
[BEATRICE *gapes.*
ALS. By all that's virtuous it takes there! [*She sneezes.*] Proceeds!
JAS. This is the strangest trick to know a maid by.>
BEAT. Ha, ha, ha!
You have given me joy of heart to drink, my lord.
ALS. No, thou hast given me such joy of heart
That never can be blasted.
BEAT. What's the matter, sir?
ALS. <See, now 'tis settled in a melancholy;
Keeps both the time and method.> My Joanna,
Chaste as the breath of Heaven, or morning's womb,
That brings the day forth! thus my love encloses thee. [*Embraces her.*

SCENE III (R)

ISABELLA *has received a love letter from* FRANCISCUS. *She has just read it.* LOLLIO *is with her in a room in the house of* ALIBIUS.

ISA. O Heaven! is this the waning[13] moon?
Does love turn fool, run mad, and all at once?—
Sirrah, here's a madman, akin to the fool too,
A lunatic lover.
LOL. No, no, not he I brought the letter from?
ISA. Compare his inside with his out, and tell me.
LOL. The out's mad, I'm sure of that; I had a taste on't. [*Reads the superscription.*] "To the bright Andromeda, chief chambermaid to the Knight of the Sun, at the sign of Scorpio, in the middle region, sent by the bellows-mender of Æolus. Pay the post." This is stark madness!
ISA. Now mark the inside. [*Opens the letter and reads.*] "Sweet lady, having now cast off this counterfeit cover of a madman, I appear to your best judgment a true and faithful lover of your beauty."
LOL. He is mad still.
ISA. "If any fault you find, chide those perfections in you which have made me imperfect; 'tis the same sun that causeth to grow and enforceth to wither—"
LOL. O rogue!
ISA. "Shapes and transshapes, destroys and builds again. I come in winter to you, dismantled of my proper ornaments; by the sweet splendor of your cheerful smiles, I spring and live a lover."
LOL. Mad rascal still!
ISA. "Tread him not under foot that shall appear an honor to your bounties. I remain—mad till I speak with you, from whom I expect my cure—yours all, or one beside himself, FRANCISCUS."
LOL. You are like to have a fine time on't. My master and I may give over our professions; I do not think but you

[13] B, waiting.

can cure fools and madmen faster than we, with little pains too. [51

Isa. Very likely!

Lol. One thing I must tell you, mistress: you perceive that I am privy to your skill; if I find you minister once, and set up the trade, I put in for my thirds; I shall be mad or fool else.

Isa. The first place is thine, believe it, Lollio,
If I do fall. [60

Lol. I fall upon you.

Isa. So.

Lol. Well, I stand to my venture.

Isa. But thy counsel now; how shall I deal with 'em?

Lol. Why, do you mean to deal with 'em?

Isa. Nay, the fair understanding,[14] how to use 'em. [69

Lol. Abuse 'em! That's the way to mad the fool, and make a fool of the madman, and then you use 'em kindly.

Isa. 'Tis easy, I'll practise; do thou observe it.
The key of thy wardrobe.

Lol. There; [*gives key*] fit yourself for 'em, and I'll fit 'em both for you.

Isa. Take thou no further notice than the outside. [*Exit.*

Lol. Not an inch; I'll put you to the inside. [81

Enter Alibius.

Alib. Lollio, art there? Will all be perfect, think'st thou?
To-morrow night, as if to close up the solemnity, Vermandero expects us.

Lol. I mistrust the madmen most; the fools will do well enough; I have taken pains with them.

Alib. Tush! they cannot miss; the [90 more absurdity,
The more commends it, so no rough behaviors
Affright the ladies; they're nice[15] things, thou know'st.

Lol. You need not fear, sir; so long as we are there with our commanding pizzles, they'll be as tame as the ladies themselves. [99

[14] Nay, interpret modestly. [15] fastidious.

Alib. I'll see them once more rehearse before they go.

Lol. I was about it, sir: look you to the madmen's morris, and let me alone with the other. There is one or two that I mistrust their fooling; I'll instruct them, and then they shall rehearse the whole measure.

Alib. Do so; I'll see the music prepared: but, Lollio,
By the way, how does my wife brook her restraint? [111
Does she not grudge at it?

Lol. So, so; she takes some pleasure in the house; she would abroad else. You must allow her a little more length, she's kept too short.

Alib. She shall along to Vermandero's with us,
That will serve her for a month's liberty.

Lol. What's that on your face, sir? [120

Alib. Where, Lollio? I see nothing.

Lol. Cry you mercy, sir, 'tis your nose; it showed like the trunk of a young elephant.

Alib. Away, rascal! I'll prepare the music, Lollio. [*Exit.*

Lol. Do, sir, and I'll dance the whilst. —[*Calling.*] Tony, where art thou, Tony? [129

Enter Antonio.

Ant. Here, cousin; where art thou?

Lol. Come, Tony, the footmanship I taught you.

Ant. I had rather ride, cousin.

Lol. Ay, a whip take you! but I'll keep you out; vault in: look you, Tony; fa, la, la, la, la. [*Dances.*

Ant. Fa, la, la, la, la. [*Sings and dances.*

Lol. There, an honor. [140

Ant. Is this an honor, coz?

Lol. Yes, an it please your worship.

Ant. Does honor bend in the hams, coz?

Ant. Marry does it, as low as worship, squireship, nay, yeomanry itself sometimes, from whence it first stiffened: there rise, a caper.

Ant. Caper after an honor, coz? [149

Lol. Very proper, for honor is but a caper, rises as fast and high, has a knee or two, and falls to th' ground again. You can remember your figure, Tony?

Ant. Yes, cousin; when I see thy figure, I can remember mine. [*Exit* Lollio.

Re-enter Isabella, *dressed as a madwoman.*

Isa. Hey, how he[16] treads the air! Shough, shough, t'other way! he burns his wings else. Here's wax enough below, Icarus, more than will be cancelled [161 these eighteen moons. He's down, he's down! what a terrible fall he had! Stand up, thou son of Cretan Dædalus, And let us tread the lower labyrinth; I'll bring thee to the clue.

Ant. Prithee, coz, let me alone.

Isa. Art thou not drowned? About thy head I saw a heap of clouds Wrapped like a Turkish turban; on [170 thy back A crook'd chameleon-colored rainbow hung Like a tiara down unto thy hams. Let me suck out those billows in thy belly; Hark, how they roar and rumble in the straits![17] Bless thee from the pirates! [179

Ant. Pox upon you, let me alone!

Isa. Why shouldst thou mount so high as Mercury, Unless thou hadst reversion of his place? Stay in the moon with me, Endymion, And we will rule these wild rebellious waves, That would have drowned my love.

Ant. I'll kick thee, if Again thou touch me, thou wild unshapen antic; [190 I am no fool, you bedlam!

Isa. But you are, as sure as I am mad. Have I put on this habit of a frantic, With love as full of fury, to beguile The nimble eye of watchful jealousy, And am I thus rewarded?

Ant. Ha! dearest beauty!

Isa. No, I have no beauty now, Nor never had but what was in my garments. [200 You a quick-sighted lover! Come not near me: Keep your caparisons; you're aptly clad; I came a feigner, to return stark mad.

Ant. Stay, or I shall change conditiön, And become as you are. [*Exit* Isabella.

Re-enter Lollio.

Lol. Why, Tony, whither now? Why, fool— [209

Ant. Whose fool, usher of idiots? You coxcomb! I have fooled too much.

Lol. You were best be mad another while then.

Ant. So I am, stark mad; I have cause enough; And I could throw the full effects on thee, And beat thee like a fury. [218

Lol. Do not, do not; I shall not forbear the gentleman under the fool, if you do. Alas! I saw through your fox-skin before now! Come, I can give you comfort; my mistress loves you; and there is as arrant a madman i' th' house as you are a fool, your rival, whom she loves not. If, after the masque, we can rid her of him, you earn her love, she says, and the fool shall ride her.

Ant. May I believe thee?

Lol. Yes, or you may choose whether you will or no. [231

Ant. She's eased of him; I've a good quarrel on't.

Lol. Well, keep your old station yet, and be quiet.

Ant. Tell her I will deserve her love. [*Exit.*

Lol. And you are like to have your desert.[18]

Enter Franciscus. [240

Fran., *singing.* "Down, down, down, a-down a-down,"—and then with a horse-trick to kick Latona's forehead, and break her bow-string.

Lol. This is t'other counterfeit; I'll put him out of his humor. [*Takes out a letter and reads.*] "Sweet lady, having

[16] B, she.
[17] B, streets.
[18] B, desire.

now cast this counterfeit cover of a madman, I appear to your best judgment a true and faithful lover of your beauty." This is pretty well for a madman. [251

Fran. <Ha! what's that?>

Lol. "Chide those perfections in you which made me imperfect."

Fran. <I am discovered to the fool.>

Lol. <I hope to discover the fool in you ere I have done with you.> "Yours all, or one beside himself, Franciscus." This madman will mend sure.

Fran. What do you read, sirrah? [260

Lol. Your destiny, sir; you'll be hanged for this trick, and another that I know.

Fran. Art thou of counsel with thy mistress?

Lol. Next her apron-strings.

Fran. Give me thy hand.

Lol. Stay, let me put yours in my pocket first. [*Putting letter into his pocket.*] Your hand is true,[19] is it not? It will not pick? I partly fear it, because I think it does lie. [272

Fran. Not in a syllable.

Lol. So, if you love my mistress so well as you have handled the matter here, you are like to be cured of your madness.

Fran. And none but she can cure it.

Lol. Well, I'll give you over then, and she shall cast your water next. [280

Fran. Take for thy pains past. [*Gives him money.*

Lol. I shall deserve more, sir, I hope. My mistress loves you, but must have some proof of your love to her.

Fran. There I meet my wishes.

Lol. That will not serve; you must meet her enemy and yours.

Fran. He's dead already.

Lol. Will you tell me that, and I parted but now with him? [291

Fran. Show me the man.

Lol. Ay, that's a right course now; see him before you kill him, in any case; and yet it needs not go so far neither. 'Tis but a fool that haunts the house and my mistress in the shape of an idiot; bang but his fool's coat well-favoredly, and 'tis well.

Fran. Soundly, soundly! [300

Lol. Only reserve him till the masque be past; and if you find him not now in the dance yourself, I'll show you. In, in! my master! [*Dances.*

Fran. He handles him like a feather. Hey! [*Exit.*

Enter Alibius.

Alib. Well said:[20] in a readiness, Lollio?

Lol. Yes, sir. [310

Alib. Away then, and guide them in, Lollio:
Entreat your mistress to see this sight.
Hark, is there not one incurable fool
That might be begged? I have friends.

Lol. I have him for you,
One that shall deserve it too.

Alib. Good boy, Lollio! [*Exit.*

Isabella *re-enters, and* Lollio *brings in the fools and madmen, who dance.*

'Tis perfect: well, fit but once these [321 strains,
We shall have coin and credit for our pains. [*Exeunt.*

ACT FIVE

Scene I (M)

Diaphanta *is fulfilling the terms of her engagement.* Beatrice *is in a gallery awaiting her appearance and is becoming increasingly anxious as the time passes. The clock strikes one.*

Beat. One struck, and yet she lies by't! O my fears!
This strumpet serves her own ends, 'tis apparent now;
Devours the pleasure with a greedy appetite, [11
And never minds my honor or my peace,
Makes havoc of my right. But she pays dearly for't;
No trusting of her life with such a secret
That cannot rule her blood to keep her promise;

[19] honest.

[20] done.

Beside, I've some suspicion of her faith to me, [19
Because I was suspected of my lord,
And it must come from her. [*Strikes two.*] Hark! by my horrors,
Another clock strikes two!

Enter De Flores.

De F. Pist! where are you?
Beat. De Flores?
De F. Ay. Is she not come from him yet?
Beat. As I'm a living soul, not!
De F. Sure the devil [30
Hath sowed his itch within her. Who would trust
A waiting-woman?
Beat. I must trust somebody.
De F. Push! they're termagants;
Especially when they fall upon their masters,
And have their ladies' first fruits; they're mad whelps;
You cannot stave 'em off from game royal: then [41
You are so rash[1] and hardy, ask no counsel;
And I could have helped you to a 'pothecary's daughter
Would have fall'n off before eleven, and thank[ed] you too.
Beat. O me, not yet! this whore forgets herself. [49
De F. The rascal fares so well: look, you're undone;
The day-star, by this hand! see Phosphorus plain yonder.
Beat. Advise me now to fall upon some ruin;
There is no counsel safe else.
De F. Peace! I ha't now,
For we must force a rising, there's no remedy.
Beat. How? take heed of that. [60
De F. Tush! be you quiet, or else give over all.
Beat. Prithee, I ha' done then.
De F. This is my reach: I'll set
Some part a-fire of Diaphanta's chamber.
Beat. How? Fire, sir? That may endanger the whole house.

[1] B, harsh.

De F. You talk of danger, when your fame's on fire!
Beat. That's true; do what thou wilt now. [71
De F. Push! I aim
At a most rich success strikes all dead sure.
The chimney being a-fire, and some light parcels
Of the least danger in her chamber only,
If Diaphanta should be met by chance then [79
Far from her lodging, which is now suspicious,
It would be thought her feärs and affrights then
Drove her to seek for succor; if not seen
Or met at all, as that's the likeliest,
For her own shame she'll hasten towards her lodging;
I will be ready with a piece high-charged,
As 'twere to cleanse the chimney; there 'tis proper now; [90
But she shall be the mark.
Beat. I'm forced to love thee now,
'Cause thou provid'st so carefully for my honor.
De F. 'Slid, it concerns the safety of us both,
Our pleasure and continuance.
Beat. One word now,
Prithee; how for the servants?
De F. I'll despatch them,
Some one way, some another in the hurry, [102
For buckets, hooks, ladders; fear not you,
The deed shall find its time; and I've thought since
Upon a safe conveyance for the body too:
How this fire purifies wit! Watch you your minute.
Beat. Fear keeps my soul upon't, I cannot stray from't. [110

Enter Alonzo's *Ghost.*

De F. Ha! what art thou that tak'st away the light
Betwixt that star and me? I dread thee not.—
'Twas but a mist of conscience; all's clear again. [*Exit.*

BEAT. Who's that, De Flores? Bless me, it slides by! [*Exit Ghost.*
Some ill thing haunts the house; 't has left behind it [121
A shivering sweat upon me; I'm afraid now.
This night hath been so tedious! O, this strumpet!
Had she a thousand lives, he should not leave her
Till he had destroyed the last. List! O my terrors! [*A clock strikes three.*
Three struck by St. Sebastian's! [130
DE F., *within.* Fire, fire, fire!
BEAT. Already? How rare is that man's speed!
How heartily he serves me! his face loathes one;
But, look upon his care, who would not love him?
The east is not more beauteous than his service.
VOICES, *within.* Fire, fire, fire! [140

Re-enter DE FLORES: *Servants pass over: bell rings.*

DE F. Away, despatch! hooks, buckets, ladders! that's well said. [*Bell rings.*
The fire-bell rings; the chimney works, my charge;
The piece is ready. [*Exit.*
BEAT. Here's a man worth loving!- -

Enter DIAPHANTA.

O you're a jewel! [151
DIA. Pardon frailty, madam;
In troth, I was so well I ev'n forgot myself.
BEAT. You've made trim work!
DIA. What?
BEAT. Hie quickly to your chamber;
Your reward follows you.
DIA. I never made
So sweet a bargain. [*Exit.* [160

Enter ALSEMERO.

ALS. O my dear Joanna,
Alas! art thou risen too? I was coming,
My absolute treasure!
BEAT. When I missed you,
I could not choose but follow.
ALS. Thou'rt all sweetness:
The fire is not so dangerous.
BEAT. Think you so, sir?
ALS. I prithee, tremble not; believe me, 'tis not. [171

Enter VERMANDERO *and* JASPERINO.

VER. O bless my house and me!
ALS. My lord your father.

Re-enter DE FLORES *with a gun.*

VER. Knave, whither goes that piece?
DE F. To scour the chimney. [*Exit.*
VER. O, well said, well said!
That fellow's good on all occasiöns.
BEAT. A wondrous necessary man, my lord. [181
VER. He hath a ready wit; he's worth 'em all, sir;
Dog at a house of fire; I ha' seen him singed ere now.—[*The piece goes off.*
Ha, there he goes!
BEAT. <'Tis done!>
ALS. Come, sweet, to bed now;
Alas! thou wilt get cold. [190
BEAT. Alas! the fear keeps that out!
My heart will find no quiet till I hear
How Diaphanta, my poor woman, fares;
It is her chamber, sir, her lodging chamber.
VER. How should the fire come there?
BEAT. As good a soul as ever lady countenanced,
But in her chamber negligent and heavy:
She scaped a mine twice. [200
VER. Twice?
BEAT. Strangely, twice, sir.
VER. Those sleepy sluts are dangerous in a house,
An they be ne'er so good.

Re-enter DE FLORES.

DE F. O poor virginity,
Thou hast paid dearly for't!
VER. Bless us, what's that?
DE F. A thing you all knew once, Diaphanta's burnt. [211
BEAT. My woman! O my woman!
DE F. Now the flames

Are greedy of her; burnt, burnt, burnt to death, sir!
BEAT. O my presaging soul!
ALS. Not a tear more!
I charge you by the last embrace I gave you [219
In bed, before this raised us.
BEAT. Now you tie me;
Were it my sister, now she gets no more.

Enter SERVANT.

VER. How now?
SER. All danger's past; you may now take
Your rests, my lords; the fire is throughly quenched.
Ah, poor gentlewoman, how soon was she stifled! [230
BEAT. De Flores, what is left of her inter;
And we, as mourners all, will follow her.
I will entreat that honor to my servant
Even of my lord himself.
ALS. Command it, sweetness.
BEAT. Which of you spied the fire first?
DE F. 'Twas I, madam.
BEAT. And took such pains in't too? A double goodness! [240
'Twere well he were rewarded.
VER. He shall be.—
De Flores, call upon me.
ALS. And upon me, sir.
[*Exeunt all except* DE FLORES.
DE F. Rewarded? Precious! here's a trick beyond me.
I see in all bouts, both of sport and wit,
Always a woman strives for the last hit.

SCENE II (M)

TOMASO *has been steadily working himself into a state of fury over the loss of his brother. And now he is prepared to quarrel with the first person he meets.*

TOM. I cannot taste the benefits of life
With the same relish I was wont to do.
Man I grow weary of, and hold his fellowship
A treacherous bloody friendship; and, because [10
I'm ignorant in whom my wrath should settle,
I must think all men villains, and the next
I meet, whoe'er he be, the murderer
Of my most worthy brother. Ha! what's he? [DE FLORES *passes over the stage.*
O, the fellow that some call "honest De Flores;" [20
But methinks honesty was hard bested
To come [t]here for a lodging; as if a queen
Should make her palace of a pest-house.
I find a contrariety in nature
Betwixt that face and me; the least occasion
Would give me game upon him; yet he's so foul[2]
One would scarce touch [him] with a sword he loved [31
And made account of; so most deadly venomous,
He would go near to poison any weapon
That should draw blood on him; one must resolve
Never to use that sword again in fight
In way of honest manhood that strikes him; [39
Some river must devour it; 'twere not fit
That any man should find it.

Re-enter DE FLORES.

<What! again?
He walks a' purpose by, sure, to choke me up,
T' infect my blood.>
DE F. My worthy noble lord!
TOM. Dost offer to come near and breathe upon me? [*Strikes him.*
DE F. A blow! [*Draws.* [50
TOM. Yea, are you so prepared?
I'll rather, like a soldier, die by th' sword,
Than, like a politician, by thy poison.
[*Draws.*
DE F. Hold, my lord, as you are honorable!
TOM. All slaves that kill by poison are still cowards.
DE F. <I cannot strike; I see his brother's wounds [60
Fresh bleeding in his eye, as in a crystal.>

[2] ugly.

I will not question this; I know you're noble;
I take my injury with thanks given, sir,
Like a wise lawyer, and as a favor
Will wear it for the worthy hand that gave it.—
<Why this from him that yesterday appeared [70
So strangely loving to me?
O, but instinct is of a subtler strain!
Guilt must not walk so near his lodge again;
He came near me now.> [*Exit.*

TOM. All league with mankind I renounce for ever,
Till I find this murderer; not so much
As common courtesy but I'll lock up;
For in the state of ignorance I live in, [80
A brother may salute his brother's murderer,
And wish good speed to th' villain in a greeting.

Enter VERMANDERO, ALIBIUS, *and* ISABELLA.

VER. Noble Piracquo!

TOM. Pray, keep on your way, sir;
I've nothing to say to you. [89

VER. Comforts bless you, sir!

TOM. I've forsworn compliment, in troth I have, sir;
As you are merely man, I have not left
A good wish for you, nor for any here.

VER. Unless you be so far in love with grief,
You will not part from't upon any terms,
We bring that news will make a welcome for us.

TOM. What news can that be? [100

VER. Throw no scornful smile
Upon the zeal I bring you, 'tis worth more, sir.
Two of the chiefest men I kept about me
I hide not from the law of your just vengeance.

TOM. Ha!

VER. To give your peace more ample satisfaction,
Thank these discoverers. [110

TOM. If you bring that calm,
Name but the manner I shall ask forgiveness in
For that contemptuous smile [I threw] upon you;
I'll perfect it with reverence that belongs
Unto a sacred altar. [*Kneels.*

VER., *raising him.* Good sir, rise;
Why, now you overdo as much a' this hand [120
As you fell short a' t'other.—Speak, Alibius.

ALIB. 'Twas my wife's fortune, as she is most lucky
At a discovery, to find out lately,
Within our hospital of fools and madmen,
Two counterfeits slipped into these disguises,
Their names Franciscus and Antonio.

VER. Both mine, sir, and I ask no favor for 'em. [131

ALIB. Now that which draws suspicion to their habits,
The time of their disguisings agrees justly
With the day of the murder.

TOM. O blest revelation!

VER. Nay, more, nay, more, sir—I'll not spare mine own
In way of justice—they both feigned a journey [140
To Briamata, and so wrought out[3] their leaves;
My love was so abused in't.

TOM. Time's too precious
To run in waste now; you have brought a peace
The riches of five kingdoms could not purchase.
Be my most happy conduct; I thirst for 'em: [150
Like subtle lightning will I wind about 'em,
And melt their marrow in 'em.

SCENE III (R)

In another apartment in the castle JASPERINO *has convinced* ALSEMERO *of* BEATRICE'S *infidelity by showing him her intimacy with* DE FLORES. *The room contains a closet at the back of the stage.*

JAS. Your confidence, I'm sure, is now of proof;
The prospect from the garden has showed [9

[3] obtained.

Enough for deep suspicion.
ALS. The black mask
That so continually was worn upon't
Condemns the face for ugly ere't be seen,
Her despite to him, and so seeming bottomless.
JAS. Touch it home then; 'tis not a shallow probe
Can search this ulcer soundly; I fear you'll find it [19
Full of corruptiön. 'Tis fit I leave you,
She meets you opportunely from that walk;
She took the back door at his parting with her. [*Exit.*
ALS. Did my fate wait for this unhappy stroke
At my first sight of woman? She is here.

Enter BEATRICE.

BEAT. Alsemero!
ALS. How do you? [30
BEAT. How do I?
Alas, [sir]! how do you? You look not well.
ALS. You read me well enough; I am not well.
BEAT. Not well, sir? Is't in my power to better you?
ALS. Yes.
BEAT. Nay, then you're cured again.
ALS. Pray, resolve me one question, lady. [41
BEAT. If I can.
ALS. None can so sure: are you honest?[4]
BEAT. Ha, ha, ha! that's a broad question, my lord.
ALS. But that's not a modest answer, my lady.
Do you laugh? My doubts are strong upon me. [50
BEAT. 'Tis innocence that smiles, and no rough brow
Can take away the dimple in her cheek.
Say I should strain a tear to fill the vault,
Which would you give the better faith to?
ALS. 'Twere but hypocrisy of a sadder color,

[4] virtuous.

But the same stuff; neither your smiles nor tears [60
Shall move or flatter me from my belief:
You are a whore!
BEAT. What a horrid sound it hath!
It blasts a beauty to deformity;
Upon what face soever that breath falls,
It strikes it ugly. O, you have ruined
What you can ne'er repair again!
ALS. I'll all
Demolish, and seek out truth within you,
If there be any left; let your sweet tongue
Prevent your heart's rifling; there I'll ransack [72
And tear out my suspiciön.
BEAT. You may, sir;
It is an easy passage; yet, if you please,
Show me the ground whereon you lost your love;
My spotless virtue may but tread on that
Before I perish.
ALS. Unanswerable; [80
A ground you cannot stand on; you fall down
Beneath all grace and goodness when you set
Your ticklish heel on't. There was a visor
Over that cunning face, and that became you; [88
Now Impudence in triumph rides upon't.
How comes this tender reconcilement else
'Twixt you and your despite, your rancorous loathing,
De Flores? he that your eye was sore at sight of,
He's now become your arm's supporter, your
Lip's saint!
BEAT. Is there the cause?
ALS. Worse, your lust's devil,
Your adultery! [100
BEAT. Would any but yourself say that,
'Twould turn him to a villain!
ALS. It was witnessed
By the counsel of your bosom, Diaphanta.
BEAT. Is your witness dead then?
ALS. 'Tis to be feared
It was the wages of her knowledge; poor soul, [109

She lived not long after the discovery.
BEAT. Then hear a story of not much less horror
Than this your false suspicion is beguiled with;
To your bed's scandal I stand up innocence,
Which even the guilt of one black other deed
Will stand for proof of; your love has made me [120
A cruel murd'ress.
ALS. Ha!
BEAT. A bloody one;
I have kissed poison for it, stroked a serpent,
That thing of hate, worthy in my esteem
Of no better employment, and him most worthy
To be so employed, I caused to murder
That innocent Piracquo, having no [130
Better means than that worst to assure
Yourself to me.
ALS. O, the place itself e'er since
Has crying been for vengeance! The temple,
Where blood and beauty first unlawfully
Fired their devotiön and quenched the right one;
'Twas in my fears at first; 'twill have it now: [140
O, thou art all deformed!
BEAT. Forget not, sir,
It for your sake was done. Shall greater dangers
Make the less welcome?
ALS. O, thou should'st have gone
A thousand leagues about to have avoided
This dangerous bridge of blood! Here we are lost. [150
BEAT. Remember, I am true unto your bed.
ALS. The bed itself's a charnel, the sheets shrouds
For murdered carcasses. It must ask pause
What I must do in this; meantime you shall
Be my prisoner only: enter my closet;
[*Exit* BEATRICE *into closet.* [160
I'll be your keeper yet. O, in what part
Of this sad story shall I first begin? Ha!
This same fellow has put me in.—

Enter DE FLORES.

De Flores!
DE F. Noble Alsemero!
ALS. I can tell you
News, sir; my wife has her commended to you. [169
DE F. That's news indeed, my lord; I think she would
Commend me to the gallows, if she could,
She ever loved me so well, I thank her.
ALS. What's this blood upon your hand, De Flores?
DE F., *taken by surprise.* Blood! no, sure 'twas washed since.
ALS. Since when, man?
DE F., *recovering himself quickly.* Since t'other day I got a knock [180
In a sword-and-dagger school; I think 'tis out.
ALS. Yes, 'tis almost out; but 'tis perceived though.
I had forgot my message; this it is,
What price goes murder?
DE F. How, sir?
ALS. I ask you, sir;
My wife's behindhand with you, she tells me, [190
For a brave bloody blow you gave for her sake
Upon Piracquo.
DE F. Upon? 'Twas quite through him sure:
Has she confessed it?
ALS. As sure as death to both of you;
And much more than that. [199
DE F. It could not be much more;
'Twas but one thing, and that—she is a whore.
ALS. It could not choose but follow. O cunning devils!
How should blind men know you from fair-faced saints?
BEAT., *within.* He lies! the villain does belie me!
DE F. Let me go to her, sir. [209
ALS. Nay, you shall to her.—

Peace, crying crocodile: your sounds are heard;
Take your prey to you;—get you into her, sir: [*Exit* De Flores *into closet.*
I'll be your pander now; rehearse again
Your scene of lust, that you may be perfect
When you shall come to act it to the black audience,
Where howls and gnashings shall be [220 music to you.
Clip your adulteress freely, 'tis the pilot
Will guide you to the *mare mortuum,*
Where you shall sink to fathoms bottomless.

Enter Vermandero, Tomaso, Alibius, Isabella, Franciscus, *and* Antonio.

Ver. O Alsemero! I've a wonder for you. [229
Als. No, sir, 'tis I, I have a wonder for you.
Ver. I have suspicion near as proof itself
For Piracquo's murder.
Als. Sir, I have proof,
Beyond suspicion, of Piracquo's murder.
Ver. Beseech you, hear me; these who have been disguised
E'er since the deed was done. [239
Als. I have two other
That were more close disguised than your two could be
E'er since the deed was done.
Ver. You'll hear me—these mine own servants—
Als. Hear me—those, nearer than your servants,
That shall acquit them, and prove them guiltless.
Fran. That may be done with easy [250 truth, sir.
Tom. How is my cause bandied through your delays!
'Tis urgent in [my] blood and calls for haste.
Give me a brother [or] alive or dead;
Alive, a wife with him; if dead, for both
A recompense for murder and adultery.
Beat., *within.* O, O, O! [259
Als Hark! 'tis coming to you
De F., *within.* Nay, I'll along for company.
Beat., *within.* O, O!
Ver. What horrid sounds are these?
Als. Come forth, you twins
Of mischief!

Re-enter De Flores, *dragging in* Beatrice, *wounded.*

De F. Here we are; if you have any more [270
To say to us, speak quickly; I shall not
Give you the hearing else; I am so stout yet,
And so, I think, that broken rib of mankind.
Ver. An host of enemies entered my citadel
Could not amaze like this: Joanna! Beatrice Joanna!
Beat. O, come not near me, sir, I shall defile you! [281
I am that of your blood was taken from you,
For your better health; look no more upon't,
But cast it to the ground regardlessly;
Let the common sewer take it from distinction.
Beneath the stars, upon yon meteor [*Pointing to* De Flores. [290
Ever hung my fate 'mongst things corruptible;
I ne'er could pluck it from him; my loathing
Was prophet to the rest, but ne'er believed.
Mine honor fell with him, and now my life.—
Alsemero, I'm a stranger to your bed;
Your bed was cozened on the nuptial night, [301
For which your false bride died.
Als. Diaphanta?
De F. Yes, and the while I coupled with your mate
At barley-break; now we are left in hell.
Ver. We are all there, it circumscribes [us] here.
De F. I loved this woman in spite of her heart: [310

Her love I earned out of Piracquo's murder.
TOM. Ha! my brother's murderer?
DE F. Yes, and her honor's prize
Was my reward; I thank life for nothing
But that pleasure; it was so sweet to me
That I have drunk up all, left none behind
For any man to pledge me.
VER. Horrid villain! [320
Keep life in him for further tortures.
DE F. No!
I can prevent you; here's my pen-knife still;
It is but one thread more, [*stabbing himself*] and now 'tis cut.—
Make haste, Joanna, by that token to thee, [328
Canst not forget, so lately put in mind;
I would not go to leave thee far behind.
[*Dies.*
BEAT. Forgive me, Alsemero, all forgive!
'Tis time to die when 'tis a shame to live.
[*Dies.*
VER. O, my name's entered now in that recórd
Where till this fatal hour 'twas never read. [339
ALS. Let it be blotted out; let your heart lose it,
And it can never look you in the face,
Nor tell a tale behind the back of life
To your dishonor. Justice hath so right
The guilty hit that innocence is quit
By proclamation, and may joy again.—
Sir, you are sensible of what truth hath done;
'Tis the best comfort that your grief can find. [350
TOM. Sir, I am satisfied; my injuries
Lie dead before me; I can exact no more,
Unless my soul were loose, and could o'ertake
Those black fugitives that are fled from hence,[5]
To take a second vengeance; but there are wraths
Deeper than mine, 'tis to be feared, about 'em. [360

[5] B, thence.

ALS. What an opacous body had that moon
That last changed on us! Here is beauty changed
To ugly whoredom; here servant-obedience
To a master-sin, imperious murder;
I, a supposed husband, changed embraces
With wantonness—but that was paid before.— [370
Your change is come too, from an ignorant wrath
To knowing friendship.—Are there any more on's?
ANT. Yes, sir, I was changed too from a little ass as I was to a great fool as I am; and had like to ha' been changed to the gallows, but that you know my innocence[6] always excuses me. [379
FRAN. I was changed from a little wit to be stark mad,
Almost for the same purpose.
ISA. Your change is still behind,
But deserve best your transformatiön:
You are a jealous coxcomb; keep schools of folly,
And teach your scholars how to break your own head.
ALIB. I see all apparent, wife, and will change now [390
Into a better husband, and ne'er keep
Scholars that shall be wiser than myself.
ALS. Sir, you have yet a son's duty living,
Please you, accept it; let that your sorrow,
As it goes from your eye, go from your heart;
Man and his sorrow at the grave must part. [399

EPILOGUE

ALS. All we can do to comfort one another,
To stay a brother's sorrow for a brother,
To dry a child from the kind father's eyes,
Is to no purpose, it rather multiplies:
Your only smiles have power to cause relive
The dead again, or in their rooms to give
Brother a new brother, father a child;
If these appear, all griefs are reconciled.

[6] idiocy.

WOMEN, BEWARE WOMEN

BY

THOMAS MIDDLETON

INTRODUCTION

One of the two plots of which "Women, Beware Women" is composed is founded on fact, the story being that of Bianca Capello and her illustrious paramour, Francesco de' Medici, whom we have seen figuring in Webster's "White Devil." The other comes from the romance of "Hippolito and Isabella," an English translation of which was entered in the Stationers' Register in November, 1627, the year of Middleton's death. That the play and the publication of the story are closely connected there should be little doubt, though the connection seems to have been overlooked, owing probably to the circumstance that the work was not in print till after the demise of the dramatist. The precise nature of the relation may be a matter of doubt: Middleton may have seen the story in manuscript; or he may have gone to the original, the publication of the translation coming as a result of the production of the play.[1] In either case the play should belong to almost the close of Middleton's career. That it does so is shown by a consideration of the writing. It is, of all the works of this dramatist, the one in which his very individual qualities are seen at their most extreme, the only one to vie with it being "A Game at Chess," which was produced in 1624. As most of the Middleton characteristics are decidedly more marked here, we may, having in view also the relation to the translated story, determine it to have immediately preceded Middleton's death in 1627.

It is a tragedy that is worthy of the chief author of "The Changeling." We may object to the unpleasantness of the theme, to the vulgarity of the two comic characters, to the cold cynicism of the presentment, that renders it impossible for us to sympathize with any of the leading persons of the play; but there is no denying its splendid eloquence, its perfect poise, the masterly ease of the dialogue, the very individual modes of expression by homely but remarkably effective metaphor, the superb management of its finest scenes, and the characteristically Middletonian touches of psychological truth. The two plots are almost perfectly welded; the opening of the play could scarcely be bettered; the double scene in Livia's house, where Livia keeps the old mother busy while the Duke gains his end with Bianca, is one of the

[1] The editor regrets that he has no means of access to the work in question, to enable him to reach a choice between these two alternatives.

finest in our drama; and the two contrasted scenes where Leantio departs from his young bride and returns to her are nothing less than masterly. Indeed there is scarcely an incident of the main plot that is not worked out to its best advantage; while the unpleasantness of the sub-plot should not blind us to the artistry displayed in its management. The basing of Livia's atrocious conduct in II 1 on her love for her brother is highly dramatic; and very clever is the conduct of the story so as to lead, in IV 2, to her denunciation of the sin she has brought into being, though the scene is spoilt somewhat by the way in which the arrangements for the marriage are allowed to crowd ludicrously upon the death of Leantio, it being no adequate excuse to say that many of the masterpieces of the time, Shakespearean and other, err similarly. The indications, in I 3, of the passionate nature of Bianca are not to be missed; and the change in her after she has become the Duke's mistress are excellently presented in III 1. In II 2 she is far from being what she afterwards becomes, the change in her being similar to that wrought in Beatrice in "The Changeling." Leantio, with his passionate love for his new-found wife and, later, his vindictive and boastful caddishness, when he shows himself utterly incapable of bearing prosperity, is a well-conceived and well-drawn figure; but even more praise should be given to his mother, who is delightful in her simplicity and her humanity. That she is permitted to drop out so early is to be regretted; and it is lamentable that she should remain mute throughout III 3: one would like to know what she thought of the doings in that scene; but the author seems to have entirely forgotten her presence. That is a piece of carelessness, as is the failure to make clear to us how or when the mother could have explained to Bianca the beauty of the monument she goes forth to see in II 2. But these are only minor faults, such as are to be encountered in almost every Elizabethan drama, and not least in the plays of the greatest dramatist of them all.

CHARACTERS

DUKE OF FLORENCE.
LORD CARDINAL, *brother of the Duke.*
FABRICIO, *father of Isabella.*
HIPPOLITO, *brother of Fabricio.*
GUARDIANO, *uncle of the Ward.*
THE WARD, *a rich young heir.*
LEANTIO, *a factor,*[1] *husband of Bianca.*

[1] a merchant's agent or clerk.

SORDIDO, *a servant of the Ward.*
LIVIA, *sister of Fabricio and Hippolito.*
ISABELLA.
BIANCA.
MOTHER OF LEANTIO.
Cardinals, Knights, States[2] of Florence, Citizens, Ladies &c.

[2] Nobles.

PLACE: *Florence.*
TIME: *The latter part of the 16th century.*

ACT ONE

Scene I

LEANTIO, *a merchant's factor, not too well favored with the world's goods, has returned to his mother's house, bringing with him a young wife, whom he has stolen from her home in Venice. The* MOTHER *is greeting him on his arrival.*

BIANCA *stands apart from the other two, out of hearing of what they say.*

MOTH. Thy sight was never yet more precious to me;
Welcome, with all th' affection of a mother
That comfort can express from natural love!
Since thy birth-joy—a mother's chiefest gladness,
After sh'as undergone her curse of sorrows—
Thou wast not more dear to me than this hour
Presents thee to my heart: welcome again!

LEAN. <'Las, poor affectionate soul, how her joys speak to me!
I have observed it often, and I know it is
The fortune commonly of knavish children
To have the loving'st mothers.>

MOTH. What's this gentlewoman?

LEAN. O, you have named the most unvaluedst[1] purchase
That youth of man had ever knowledge of!
As often as I look upon that treasure,
And know it to be mine—there lies the blessing!—
It joys me that I ever was ordained
To have a being, and to live 'mongst men,
Which is a fearful living, and a poor one,
Let a man truly think on't:
To have the toil and griefs of fourscore years
Put up in a white sheet, tied with two knots;
Methinks it should strike earthquakes in adulterers,
When even the very sheets they commit sin in
May prove, for aught they know, all their last garments.
O, what a mark were there for women then!
But beauty, able to content a conqueror
Whom earth could scarce content, keeps me in compass:
I find no wish in me bent sinfully
To this man's sister, or to that man's wife;
In love's name let 'em keep their honesties,
And cleave to their own husbands: 'tis their duties.
Now when I go to church I can pray handsomely,
Nor come, like gallants, only to see faces,
As if lust went to market still on Sundays.
I must confess I'm guilty of one sin, mother,
More than I brought into the world with me;
But that I glory in; 'tis theft, but noble
As ever greatness yet shot up withal.

MOTH. How's that?

LEAN. Never to be repented, mother,
Though sin be death; I had died, if I had not sinned;
And here's my masterpiece; do you now behold her!
Look on her well, she's mine. Look on her better;
Now say if't be not the best piece of theft

[1] most invaluable.

That ever was committed? and I've my pardon for't:
'Tis sealed from Heaven by marriage.
MOTH. Married to her!
LEAN. You must keep counsel, mother, I'm undone else:
If it be known, I've lost her; do but think now
What that loss is: life's but a trifle to't.
From Venice, her consent and I have brought her
From parents great in wealth, more now in rage;
But let storms spend their furies; now we've got
A shelter o'er our quiet innocent loves,
We are contented: little money sh'as brought me;
View but her face, you may see all her dowry,
Save that which lies locked up in hidden virtues,
Like jewels kept in cabinets.
MOTH. You're to blame,
If your obedience will give way to a check,
To wrong such a perfection.
LEAN. How?
MOTH. Such a creature,
To draw her from her fortune, which, no doubt,
At the full time might have proved rich and noble.
You know not what you've done; my life can give you
But little helps; and my death, lesser hopes;
And hitherto your own means has but made shift
To keep you single, and that hardly too:
What ableness have you to do her right then
In maintenance fitting her birth and virtues,
Which every woman of necessity looks for,
And most to go above it, not confined
By their conditions, virtues, bloods, or births,
But flowing to affections, wills, and humors?
LEAN. Speak low, sweet mother; you're able to spoil as many
As come within the hearing; if it be not
Your fortune to mar all, I have much marvel.
I pray do not you teach her to rebel,
When she is in a good way to obedience:
To rise with other women in commotion
Against their husbands for six gowns a-year,
And so maintain their cause, when they're once up,
In all things else that require cost enough.
They're all of 'em a kind of spirits soon raised,
But not so soon laid, mother; as, for example,
A woman's belly is got up in a trice;
A simple charge ere't be laid down again:
So ever in all their quarrels and their courses;
And I'm a proud man I hear nothing of 'em,
They're very still, I thank my happiness,
And sound asleep; pray let not your tongue wake 'em:
If you can but rest quiet, she's contented
With all conditions that my fortunes bring her to;
To keep close, as a wife that loves her husband;
To go after the rate of my ability,
Not the licentious swing of her own will,
Like some of her old school-fellows; she intends
To take out other works in a new sampler,
And frame the fashion of an honest love,
Which knows no wants, but, mocking poverty,
Brings forth more children, to make rich men wonder
At divine providence, that feeds mouths of infants,
And sends them none to feed, but stuffs their rooms
With fruitful bags, their beds with barren wombs.
Good mother, make not you things worse than they are

Out of your too much openness; pray take heed on't,
Nor imitate the envy of old people,
That strive to mar good sport, because they're perfect:
I would have you more pitiful to youth,
Especially to your own flesh and blood.
I'll prove an excellent husband, here's my hand,
Lay in provision, follow my business roundly,
And make you a grandmother in forty weeks.
Go, pray salute her, bid her welcome cheerfully.
MOTH., *kissing* BIANCA. Gentlewoman, thus much is a debt of courtesy,
Which fashionable strangers pay each other
At a kind meeting: then there's more than one
Due to the knowledge I have of your nearness;
I'm bold to come again, and now salute you
By the name of daughter, which may challenge more
Than ordinary respect.
LEAN. <Why, this is well now,
And I think few mothers of threescore will mend it.>
MOTH. What I can bid you welcome to, is mean;
But make it all your own; we're full of wants,
And cannot welcome worth.
LEAN. <Now this is scurvy,
And spoke as if a woman lacked her teeth;
These old folks talk of nothing but defects,
Because they grow so full of 'em themselves.>
BIAN. Kind mother, there is nothing can be wanting
To her that does enjoy all her desires:
Heaven send a quiet peace with this man's love,
And I'm as rich as virtue can be poor,
Which were enough after the rate of mind
To erect temples for content placed here.
I have forsook friends, fortunes, and my country;
And hourly I rejoice in't. Here's my friends,
And few is the good number. Thy successes,
Howe'er they look, I will still name my fortunes;
Hopeful or spiteful, they shall all be welcome:
Who invites many guests has of all sorts,
As he that traffics much drinks of all fortunes,
Yet they must all be welcome, and used well.
I'll call this place the place of my birth now,
And rightly too, for here my love was born;
And that's the birthday of a woman's joys.
[*To* LEANTIO.] You have not bid me welcome since I came.
LEAN. That I did questionless.
BIAN. No, sure—how was't?
I've quite forgot it.
LEAN. Thus. [*Kisses her.*
BIAN. O, sir, 'tis true,
Now I remember well; I've done thee wrong;
Pray take't again, sir. [*Kisses him.*
LEAN. How many of these wrongs
Could I put up in an hour, and turn up the glass
For twice as many more!
MOTH. Will't please you to walk in, daughter?
BIAN. Thanks, sweet mother;
The voice of her that bare me is not more pleasing. [*Exit with* MOTHER.
LEAN. Though my own care and my rich master's trust
Lay their commands both on my factorship,
This day and night I'll know no other business
But her and her dear welcome. 'Tis a bitterness
To think upon to-morrow, that I must leave
Her still to the sweet hopes of the week's end;

That pleasure should be so restrained and curbed [289
After the course of a rich work-master,
That never pays till Saturday night! marry,
It comes together in a round sum then,
And does more good, you'll say. O fair-eyed Florence,
Didst thou but know what a most matchless jewel
Thou now art mistress of, a pride would take thee,
Able to shoot destruction through the bloods [301
Of all thy youthful sons! but 'tis great policy
To keep choice treasures in obscurest places;
Should we show thieves our wealth, 'twould make 'em bolder;
Temptation is a devil will not stick
To fasten upon a saint; take heed of that: [310
The jewel is cased up from all men's eyes;
Who could imagine now a gem were kept
Of that great value under this plain roof?
But how in times of absence? what assurance
Of this restraint then? Yes, yes, there's one with her:
Old mothers know the world; and such as these, [320
When sons lock chests, are good to look to keys. [*Exit.*

Scene II

Guardiano *and* Fabricio *are fixing up a marriage between the former's* Ward *and* Isabella. Livia *is with them in* Fabricio's *garden.*

Guar. What, has your daughter seen him yet? know you that?
Fab. No matter, she shall love him.
Guar. Nay, let's have fair play;
He has been now my ward some fifteen year, [10
And 'tis my purpose, as time calls upon me,
By custom seconded and such moral virtues,
To tender him a wife. Now, sir, this wife
I'd fain elect out of a daughter of yours.
You see my meaning's fair: if now this daughter
So tendered—let me come to your own phrase, sir— [21
Should offer to refuse him, I were hanselled.
<Thus am I fain to calculate all my words
For the meridian of a foolish old man,
To take his understanding.> What do you answer, sir?
Fab. I say still, she shall love him.
Guar. Yet again? [30
And shall she have no reason for this love?
Fab. Why, do you think that women love with reason?
Guar. <I perceive fools are not at all hours foolish,
No more than wise men wise.>
Fab. I had a wife,
She ran mad for me! she had no reason for't, [40
For aught I could perceive.—What think you, lady sister?
Guar. <'Twas a fit match that, being both out of their wits.>
A loving wife! it seemed
She strove to come as near you as she could.
Fab. And, if her daughter prove not mad for love too, [49
She takes not after her; nor after me,
If she prefer reason before my pleasure.—
You're an experienced widow, lady sister,
I pray, let your opinion come amongst us.
Liv. I must offend you then, if truth will do't,
And take my niece's part, and call't injustice
To force her love to one she never saw:
Maids should both see and like, all little enough; [61
If they love truly after that, 'tis well.
Counting the time, she takes one man till death;

That's a hard task, I tell you; but one may
Inquire at three years' end amongst young wives,
And mark how the game goes.
FAB. Why, is not man [70
Tied to the same observance, lady sister,
And in one woman?
LIV. 'Tis enough for him;
Besides, he tastes of many sundry dishes
That we poor wretches never lay our lips to,
As obedience forsooth, subjection, duty, and such kickshaws, [78
All of our making, but served in to them;
And if we lick a finger then sometimes,
We're not to blame; your best cooks often use it.
FAB. Thou'rt a sweet lady sister, and a witty.
LIV. A witty! O the bud of commendation,
Fit for a girl of sixteen! I am blown, man;
I should be wise by this time; and, for instance, [90
I've buried my two husbands in good fashion,
And never mean more to marry.
GUAR. No! why so, lady?
LIV. Because the third shall never bury me:
I think I'm more than witty.—How think you, sir?
FAB. I have paid often fees to a counsellor [100
Has had a weaker brain.
LIV. Then I must tell you
Your money was soon parted.
GUAR. Like enow.[2]
LIV. Brother,
Where is my niece? let her be sent for straight,
If you have any hope 'twill prove a wedding; [109
'Tis fit, i'faith, she should have one sight of him
And stop upon't, and not be joined in haste,
As if they went to stock a new-found land.
FAB. Look out her uncle, and you're sure of her;
Those two are ne'er asunder; they've been heard
In argument at midnight; moonshine nights [121
Are noondays with them; they walk out their sleeps,
Or rather at those hours appear like those
That walk in 'em, for so they did to me.
Look you, I told you truth; they're like a chain;
Draw but one link, all follows.

Enter HIPPOLITO *and* ISABELLA.

GUAR. <O affinity, [131
What piece of excellent workmanship art thou!
'Tis work clean wrought, for there's no lust but love in't,
And that abundantly; when in stranger things
There is no love at all but what lust brings.>
FAB., *to* ISABELLA. <On with your [140
mask! for 'tis your part to see now,
And not be seen: go to, make use of your time;
See what you mean to like; nay, and, I charge you,
Like what you see: do you hear me? there's no dallying;
The gentleman's almost twenty; and 'tis time
He were getting lawful heirs, and [150
you a-breeding on 'em.
ISA. Good father—
FAB. Tell not me of tongues and rumors:
You'll say the gentleman is somewhat simple;
The better for a husband, were you wise.
For those that marry fools live ladies' lives.
On with the mask! I'll hear no more: he's rich; [160
The fool's hid under bushels.
LIV. Not so hid neither

[2] This speech in B is "Light her now, brother," Livia's beginning, "Where is my niece?"

But here's a foul great piece of him, methinks;
What will he be when he comes altogether?>

The WARD, *who may be described as a case of arrested development, enters with a trap-stick. He has been having a game of tip-cat, and is boasting to* SORDIDO *of his prowess.* [172

WARD. Beat him?
I beat him out o' the field with his own cat-stick,
Yet gave him the first hand.
SOR. O strange!
WARD. I did it;
Then he set jacks[3] on me.
SOR. What, my lady's tailor?
WARD. Ay, and I beat him too. [181
SOR. Nay, that's no wonder;
He's used to beating.
WARD. Nay, I tickled him,
When I came once to my tippings.
SOR. Now you talk on 'em,
There was a poulterer's wife made a great complaint
Of you last night to your guardianer, that you struck [190
A bump in her child's head as big as an egg.
WARD. An egg may prove a chicken; then in time
The poulterer's wife will get by't: when I am
In game, I'm furious; came my mother's eyes
In my way, I would not lose a fair end; no, [200
Were she alive, but with one tooth in her head,
I should venture the striking out of that:
I think of nobody when I'm in play,
I am so earnest. Coads me, my guardianer!
Prithee, lay up my cat and cat-stick safe.
SOR. Where, sir? i' the chimney-corner?
WARD. "Chimney-corner"!
SOR. Yes, sir; your cats are always safe i' the chimney-corner, [211
Unless they burn their coats.
WARD. Marry, that I am afraid on!

[3] fellows.

SOR. Why, then, I will bestow your cat i' the gutter;
And there she's safe, I'm sure.
WARD. If I but live
To keep a house, I'll make thee a great man, [219
If meat and drink can do't. I can stoop gallantly,
And pitch out when I list; I'm dog at a hole.
I mar'l[4] my guardianer does not seek a wife for me;
I protest I'll have a bout with the maids else,
Or contract myself at midnight to the larder-woman,
In presence of a fool or a sack-posset. [230
GUAR. Ward!
WARD. I feel myself after any exercise
Horribly prone: let me but ride, I'm lusty;
A cock-horse, straight, i'faith!
GUAR. Why, ward, I say!
WARD. I'll forswear eating eggs in moonshine nights;
There's ne'er a one I eat but turns into a cock [240
In four-and-twenty hours: if my hot blood
Be not took down in time, sure 'twill crow shortly.
GUAR. Do you hear, sir? follow me, I must new-school you.
WARD. School me? I scorn that now, I am past schooling:
I'm not so base to learn to write and read; [250
I was born to better fortunes in my cradle. [*Exeunt* GUARDIANO, *the* WARD, *and* SORDIDO.
FAB. How do you like him, girl? this is your husband:
Like him, or like him not, wench, you shall have him,
And you shall love him.
LIV. O, soft there, brother! though you be a justice, [260
Your warrant cannot be served out of your liberty;
You may compel, out of the power of father,

[4] marvel.

Things merely harsh to a maid's flesh and blood;
But when you come to love, there the soil alters:
You're in another country, where your laws [270
Are no more set by than the cacklings of geese
In Rome's great Capitol.
FAB. Marry him she shall then,
Let her agree upon love afterwards.
LIV. You speak now, brother, like an honest mortal
That walks upon th' earth with a staff; you were up
I' the clouds before; you would command love; [281
And so do most old folks that go without it.— [*Exit* FABRICIO.
My best and dearest brother, I could dwell here;
There is not such another seat on earth,
Where all good parts better express themselves.
HIP. You'll make me blush anon.
LIV. 'Tis but like saying grace before a feast then; [291
And that's most comely; thou art all a feast,
And she that has thee a most happy guest.
Prithee, cheer up thy niece with special counsel. [*Exit.*
HIP. <I would 'twere fit to speak to her what I would; [299
But 'twas not a thing ordained; Heaven has forbid it;
And 'tis most meet that I should rather perish
Than the decree divine receive least blemish.—
Feed inward, you my sorrows; make no noise;
Consume me silent; let me be stark dead,
Ere the world know I'm sick. You see [310
my honesty;[5]
If you befriend me, so.>
ISA. <Marry a fool!
Can there be greater misery to a woman
That means to keep her days true to her husband,
And know no other man? so virtue wills it.
Why, how can I obey and honor him,
But I must needs commit idolatry? [320
A fool is but the image of a man,
And that but ill made neither. O, the heartbreakings
Of miserable maids, where love's enforced!
The best condition is but bad enough,
When women have their choices; commonly
They do but buy their thraldoms, and bring great portions [330
To men to keep 'em in subjectiön,
As if a fearful prisoner should bribe
The keeper to be good to him, yet lies in still,
And glad of a good usage, a good look sometimes.
By'r lady, no misery surmounts a woman's;
Men buy their slaves, but women buy their masters. [340
Yet honesty and love makes all this happy,
And, next to angels', the most blessed estate.
That providence, that has made every poison
Good for some use, and sets four warring elements
At peace in man, can make a harmony
In things that are most strange to human reason. [351
O, but this marriage!>—What! are you sad too, uncle?
Faith, then there's a whole household down together:
Where shall I go to seek my comfort now,
When my best friend's distressed? what is't afflicts you, sir?
HIP. Faith, nothing but one grief that will not leave me, [361
And now 'tis welcome; every man has something
To bring him to his end, and this will serve,

5 virtue.

Joined with your father's cruelty to you:
That helps it forward.
ISA. O, be cheered, sweet uncle!
How long has't been upon you? I [370
ne'er spied it;
What a dull sight have I! how long, I pray, sir?
HIP. Since I first saw you, niece, and left Bologna.
ISA. And could you deal so unkindly with my heart,
To keep it up so long hid from my pity?
Alas! how shall I trust your love hereafter? [380
Have we passed through so many arguments,
And missed of that still, the most needful one?
Walked out whole nights together in discourses,
And the main point forgot? we're to blame both;
This is an obstinate, wilful forgetfulness,
And faulty on both parts: let's lose no time now; [391
Begin, good uncle, you that feel't; what is it?
HIP. You of all creatures, niece, must never hear on't;
'Tis not a thing ordained for you to know.
ISA. Not I, sir? all my joys that word cuts off;
You made profession once you loved me best: [401
'Twas but profession.
HIP. Yes, I do't too truly,
And fear I shall be chid for't. Know the worst then;
I love thee dearlier than an uncle can.
ISA. Why, so you ever said, and I believed it.
HIP. <So simple is the goodness of her thoughts, [410
They understand not yet th' unhallowed language
Of a near sinner; I must yet be forced,
Though blushes be my venture, to come nearer.>
As a man loves his wife, so love I thee.
ISA. What's that? Methought I heard ill news come toward me,
Which commonly we understand too soon, [420
Then over-quick at hearing; I'll prevent it;
Though my joys fare the harder, welcome it;
It shall ne'er come so near mine ear again.
Farewell all friendly solaces and discourses;
I'll learn to live without ye, for your dangers [430
Are greater than your comforts. What's become
Of truth in love, if such we cannot trust,
When blood, that should be love, is mixed with lust? [*Exit.*
HIP. The worst can be but death; and let it come.
He that lives joyless, every day's his doom. [*Exit.*

SCENE III

LEANTIO *is in front of his mother's house. He is about to return to work but is not enthusiastic about it.*

LEAN. Methinks I'm even as dull now at departure
As men observe great gallants the next day
After a revel; you shall see 'em look
Much of my fashion, if you mark 'em well. [10
'Tis even a second hell to part from pleasure
When man has got a smack on't: as many holydays
Coming together makes your poor heads idle
A great while after, and are said to stick
Fast in their fingers' ends; even so does game [19
In a new-married couple; for the time,
It spoils all thrift, and indeed lies a-bed
T' invent all the new ways for great expenses. [BIANCA *and* MOTHER *appear at a window above.*
See an she be not got on purpose now
Into the window to look after me!

I've no power to go now, an I should be hanged;
Farewell all business! I desire no more
Than I see yonder: let the goods at quay
Look to themselves; why should I toil my youth out? [32
It is but begging two or three year sooner,
And stay with her continually. Is't a match?
O, fie, what a religion have I leaped into!
Get out again, for shame! the man loves best
When his care's most; that shows his zeal to love: [41
Fondness is but the idiot to[6] affection,
That plays at hot-cockles with rich merchants' wives,
Good to make sport withal when the chest's full,
And the long warehouse cracks. 'Tis time of day
For us to be more wise; 'tis early with us; [50
And if they lose the morning of their affairs,
They commonly lose the best part of the day.
Those that are wealthy, and have got enough,
'Tis after sunset with 'em; they may rest,
Grow fat with ease, banquet, and toy, and play,
When such as I enter the heat o' the day;
And I'll do't cheerfully. [61

BIAN. I perceive, sir,
You're not gone yet; I've good hope you'll stay now.

LEAN. Farewell; I must not.

BIAN. Come, come, pray return;
To-morrow, adding but a little care more,
Will despatch all as well; believe me, 'twill, sir. [69

LEAN. I could well wish myself where you would have me;
But love that's wanton must be ruled awhile
By that that's careful, or all goes to ruin:
As fitting is a government in love
As in a kingdom; where 'tis all mere lust,
'Tis like an insurrection in the people
That, raised in self-will, wars against all reason; [80
But love that is respective[7] for increase
Is like a good king that keeps all in peace.
Once more, farewell!

BIAN. But this one night, I prithee!

LEAN. Alas, I'm in for twenty, if I stay,
And then for forty more! I've such luck to flesh,
I never bought a horse but he bore double. [90
If I stay any longer, I shall turn
An everlasting spendthrift: as you love
To be maintained well, do not call me again,
For then I shall not care which end goes forward.
Again, farewell to thee.

BIAN. Since it must, farewell too!

[*Exit* LEANTIO.

MOTH. Faith, daughter, you're to blame; you take the course [101
To make him an ill husband; troth, you do;
And that disease is catching, I can tell you,
Ay, and soon taken by a young man's blood,
And that with little urging. Nay, fie, see now, [109
What cause have you to weep? would I had no more,
That have lived threescore years! there were a cause,
And 'twere well thought on. Trust me, you're to blame;
His absence cannot last five days at utmost:
Why should those tears be fetched forth? cannot love [119
Be even as well expressed in a good look,
But it must see her face still in a fountain?
It shows like a country maid dressing her head
By a dish of water: come, 'tis an old custom
To weep for love.

[6] compared to.

[7] considerate.

Enter several Boys, *several* Citizens, *and an* Apprentice.

1 Boy. Now they come, now they [130
come!
2 Boy. The duke!
3 Boy. The state[s]![8]
1 Cit. How near, boy?
1 Boy. I' the next street,
sir, hard at hand.
1 Cit. You, sirrah, get a standing for
your mistress—
The best in all the city.
Appren. I have't for her, sir; [140
'Twas a thing I provided for her over-
night;
'Tis ready at her pleasure.
1 Cit. Fetch her to't then:
Away, sir; [*Exeunt* Boys, Citizens, *and*
Apprentice.
Bian. What's the meaning of this
hurry,
Can you tell, mother?
Moth. What a memory [150
Have I! I see by that years come upon
me:
Why, 'tis a yearly custom and solemnity,
Religiously observed by the duke and
states,
To St. Mark's temple, the fifteenth of
April;
See, if my dull brains had not quite for-
got it! [159
'Twas happily questioned of thee; I had
gone down else,
Sat like a drone below, and never thought
on't.
I would not, to be ten years younger
again,
That you had lost the sight: now you
shall see
Our duke, a goodly gentleman of his
years.
Bian. Is he old then? [170
Moth. About some fifty-five.
Bian. That's no great age in man; he's
then at best
For wisdom and for judgment.
Moth. The lord cardinal,
His noble brother: there's a comely gen-
tleman,

[8] nobles.

And greater in devotion than in blood.
Bian. He's worthy to be marked. [179
Moth. You shall behold
All our chief states of Florence: you came
fortunately
Against this solemn day.
Bian. I hope so always.
[*Music within.*
Moth. I hear 'em near us now: do you
stand easily?
Bian. Exceeding well, good mother.
Moth. Take this stool.
Bian. I need it not, I thank you. [190
Moth. Use your will then.

Enter six Knights bare-headed, then two Cardinals, then the Lord Cardinal, *then the* Duke; *after him the States of Florence by two and two, with variety of music and song. They pass over the stage in great pomp, and exeunt.*

Moth. How like you, daughter?
Bian. 'Tis a noble state;
Methinks my soul could dwell upon the
reverence [201
Of such a solemn and most worthy cus-
tom.
Did not the duke look up? methought
he saw us.
Moth. That's every one's conceit that
sees a duke;
If he look steadfastly, he looks straight
at them,
When he, perhaps, good, careful gentle-
man, [211
Never minds any, but the look he casts
Is at his own intentions, and his object
Only the public good.
Bian. Most likely so.
Moth. Come, come, we'll end this argu-
ment below. [*Exeunt above.*

ACT TWO

Scene I

In a room in Livia's *house,* Hippolito *has just confessed to her his infatuation for* Isabella.

Liv. A strange affection, brother! when
I think on't,
I wonder how thou cam'st by't.

HIP. Even as easily
As man comes by destruction, which oft-
times
He wears in his own bosom. [10
LIV. Is the world
So populous in women, and creation
So prodigal in beauty, and so various,
Yet does love turn thy point to thine own
blood?
'Tis somewhat too unkindly: must thy
eye
Dwell evilly on the fairness of thy kin-
dred, [19
And seek not where it should? it is con-
fined
Now in a narrower prison than was
made for't;
It is allowed a stranger; and, where
bounty
Is made the great man's honor, 'tis ill
husbandry
To spare, and servants shall have small
thanks for't;
So he Heaven's bounty seems to scorn
and mock [31
That spares free means, and spends of
his own stock.
HIP. Ne'er was man's misery so soon
summed up,
Counting how truly.
LIV. Nay, I love you so,
That I shall venture much to keep a
change from you
So fearful as this grief will bring [40
upon you;
Faith, it even kills me when I see you
faint
Under a reprehension, and I'll leave it,
Though I know nothing can be better
for you.
Prithee, sweet brother, let not passion
waste
The goodness of thy time and of thy for-
tune: [50
Thou keep'st the treasure of that life I
love
As dearly as mine own; and if you think
My former words too bitter, which were
ministered
By truth and zeal, 'tis but a hazarding
Of grace and virtue, and I can bring
forth
As pleasant fruits as sensuality wishes [59
In all her teeming longings; this I can do.
HIP. O, nothing that can make my
wishes perfect!
LIV. I would that love of yours were
pawned to't, brother,
And as soon lost that way as I could
win!
Sir, I could give as shrewd a lift to
chastity
As any she that wears a tongue in
Florence; [70
Sh'ad need be a good horsewoman, and
sit fast,
Whom my strong argument could not
fling at last.
Prithee, take courage, man; though I
should counsel
Another to despair, yet I am pitiful
To thy afflictions, and will venture hard
(I will not name for what, it is not hand-
some): [80
Find you the proof and praise me.
HIP. Then I fear me
I shall not praise you in haste.
LIV. This is the comfort:
You are not the first, brother, has at-
tempted
Things more forbidden than this seems
to be.
I'll minister all cordials now to you,
Because I'll cheer you up, sir. [90
HIP. I'm past hope.
LIV. Love, thou shalt see me do a
strange cure then,
As e'er was wrought on a disease so
mortal
And near akin to shame. When shall
you see her?
HIP. Never in comfort more.
LIV. You're so impatient too!
HIP. Will you believe? death, sh'as
forsworn my company, [101
And sealed it with a blush.
LIV. So, I perceive
All lies upon my hands then; well, the
more glory
When the work's finished.

Enter SERVANT.

How now, sir? the news?
SER. Madam, your niece, the virtuous Isabella,
Is lighted now to see you.
LIV. That's great fortune;
Sir, your stars bless you simply.[1]—Lead her in. [*Exit* SERVANT.
HIP. What's this to me?
LIV. Your absence, gentle brother;
I must bestir my wits for you.
HIP., *bitterly*. Ay, to great purpose! [*Exit*.
LIV. Beshrew you, would I loved you not so well!
I'll go to bed, and leave this deed undone:
I am the fondest where I once affect;
The carefull'st of their healths and of their ease, forsooth,
That I look still but slenderly to mine own:
I take a course to pity him so much now
That I've none left for modesty and myself.
This 'tis to grow so liberal: you've few sisters
That love their brothers' ease 'bove their own honesties;
But if you question my affections,
That will be found my fault.

Enter ISABELLA.

Niece, your love's welcome.
Alas! what draws that paleness to thy cheeks?
This enforced marriage towards?
ISA. It helps, good aunt,
Amongst some other griefs; but those I'll keep
Locked up in modest silence, for they're sorrows
Would shame the tongue more than they grieve the thought.
LIV. Indeed, the ward is simple.
ISA. Simple! that were well;
Why, one might make good shift with such a husband;
But he's a fool entailed, he halts downright in't.

[1] B, simple.

LIV. And, knowing this, I hope 'tis at your choice
To take or refuse, niece.
ISA. You see it is not.
I loathe him more than beauty can hate death,
Or age her spiteful neighbor.
LIV. Let't appear then.
ISA. How can I, being born with that obedience
That must submit unto a father's will?
If he command, I must of force consent.
LIV. Alas, poor soul! be not offended, prithee,
If I set by the name of niece awhile,
And bring in pity in a stranger fashion;
It lies here in this breast would cross this match.
ISA. How! cross it, aunt?
LIV. Ay, and give thee more liberty
Than thou hast reason yet to apprehend.
ISA. Sweet aunt, in goodness keep not hid from me
What may befriend my life!
LIV. Yes, yes, I must!
When I return to reputation,
And think upon the solemn vow I made
To your dead mother, my most loving sister;
As long as I've her memory 'twixt mine eyelids,
Look for no pity now.
ISA. Kind, sweet, dear aunt—
LIV. No, 'twas a secret I've took special care of,
Delivered by your mother on her deathbed;
That's nine years now, and I'll not part from't yet,
Though ne'er was fitter time, nor greater cause for't.
ISA. As you desire the praises of a virgin—
LIV. Good sorrow, I would do thee any kindness
Not wronging secrecy or reputation.
ISA. Neither of which, as I have hope of fruitfulness,
Shall receive wrong from me.
LIV. Nay, 'twould be your own wrong

As much as any's, should it come to that once.
Isa. I need no better means to work persuasion then.
Liv. Let it suffice you may refuse this fool,
Or you may take him as you see occasion,
For your advantage; the best wits will do't;
You've liberty enough in your own will;
You cannot be enforced; there grows the flower,
If you could pick it out, makes whole life sweet to you.
That which you call your father's command's nothing,
Then your obedience must needs be as little:
If you can make shift here to taste your happiness,
Or pick out aught that likes you, much good do you;
You see your cheer; I'll make you no set dinner.
Isa. And, trust me, I may starve for all the good
I can find yet in this: sweet aunt, deal plainlier.
Liv. Say I should trust you now upon an oath,
And give you, in a secret, that would start you,
How am I sure of you in faith and silence?
Isa. Equal assurance may I find in mercy
As you for that in me!
Liv. It shall suffice:
Then know, however custom has made good,
For reputation's sake, the names of niece
And aunt 'twixt you and I, we're nothing[2] less.
Isa. How's that?
Liv. I told you I should start your blood;
You are no more allied to any of us,
Save what the courtesy of opinion casts
Upon your mother's memory and your name,
Than the merest stranger is, or one begot
At Naples when the husband lies at Rome;
There's so much odds betwixt us. Since your knowledge
Wished more instruction, and I have your oath
In pledge for silence, it makes me talk the freelier.
Did never the report of that famed Spaniard,
Marquis of Coria, since your time was ripe
For understanding, fill your ear with wonder?
Isa. Yes; what of him? I've heard his deeds of honor
Often related when we lived in Naples.
Liv. You heard the praises of your father then.
Isa. My father!
Liv. That was he; but all the business
So carefully and so discreetly carried
That fame received no spot by't, not a blemish;
Your mother was so wary to her end,
None knew it but her conscience and her friend,
Till penitent confession made it mine,
And now my pity yours; it had been long else;
And I hope care and love alike in you,
Made good by oath, will see it take no wrong now.
How weak his commands now whom you call father!
How vain all his enforcements, your obedience!
And what a largeness in your will and liberty
To take, or to reject, or to do both!
For fools will serve to father wise men's children:
All this you've time to think on. O, my wench,
Nothing o'erthrows our sex but indiscretion!
We might do well else of a brittle people
As any under the great canopy:

[2] Qy, something.

I pray, forget not but to call me aunt still;
Take heed of that, it may be marked in time else;
But keep your thoughts to yourself, from all the world,
Kindred, or dearest friend; nay, I entreat you,
From him that all this while you have called uncle;
And, though you love him dearly, as I know
His deserts claim as much even from a stranger,
Yet let not him know this, I prithee, do not;
As ever thou hast hope of second pity,
If thou shouldst stand in need on't, do not do't.

ISA. Believe my oath, I will not.

LIV. Why, well said.—
<Who shows more craft t' undo a maidenhead,
I'll resign my part to her.>

Enter HIPPOLITO.

[*To* HIPPOLITO.] <She's thine own; go.

HIP. Alas, fair flattery cannot cure my sorrows!> [*Exit* LIVIA.

ISA. <Have I passed so much time in ignorance,
And never had the means to know myself
Till this blessed hour? thanks to her virtuous pity
That brought it now to light; would I had known it
But one day sooner! he had then received
In favors what, poor gentleman, he took
In bitter words; a slight and harsh reward
For one of his deserts.>

HIP. <There seems to me now
More anger and distraction in her looks.
I'm gone; I'll not endure a second storm;
The memory of the first is not past yet.>

ISA. <Are you returned, you comforts of my life,
In this man's presence? I will keep you fast now,
And sooner part eternally from the world
Than my good joys in you.>—Prithee, forgive me,
I did but chide in jest; the best loves use it
Sometimes; it sets an edge upon affection:
When we invite our best friends to a feast,
'Tis not all sweetmeats that we set before them;
There's somewhat sharp and salt, both to whet appetite
And make 'em taste their wine well; so, methinks,
After a friendly, sharp, and savory chiding,
A kiss tastes wondrous well, and full o' the grape;
How think'st thou? does't not? [*Kisses him.*

HIP. 'Tis so excellent,
I know not how to praise it, what to say to't!

ISA. This marriage shall go forward.

HIP. With the ward?
Are you in earnest?

ISA. 'Twould be ill for us else.

HIP. <For us! how means she that?>

ISA. Troth, I begin
To be so well, methinks, within this hour,
For all this match able to kill one's heart,
Nothing can pull me down now; should my father
Provide a worse fool yet—which I should think
Were a hard thing to compass—I'd have him either;
The worse the better; none can come amiss now,
If he want wit enough; so discretion love me,
Desert, and judgment, I've content sufficient.
She that comes once to be a housekeeper
Must not look every day to fare well, sir,
Like a young waiting-gentlewoman in service,
For she feeds commonly as her lady does;

No good bit passes her but she gets a taste on't;
But, when she comes to keep house [410 for herself,
She's glad of some choice cates then once a week,
Or twice at most, and glad if she can get 'em;
So must affection learn to fare with thankfulness.
Pray, make your love no stranger, sir, that's all,—
<Though you be one yourself, and know not on't, [421
And I have sworn you must not.> [*Exit.*

HIP. This is beyond me!
Never came joys so unexpectedly
To meet desires in man: how came she thus?
What has she done to her, can any tell?
'Tis beyond sorcery this, drugs, or love-powders;
Some art that has no name, sure; strange to me [431
Of all the wonders I e'er met withal
Throughout my ten years' travels; but I'm thankful for't.
This marriage now must of necessity forward;
It is the only veil wit can devise
To keep our acts hid from sin-piercing eyes. [*Exit.*

SCENE II

GUARDIANO *and* LIVIA *are in a room in* LIVIA'S *house. On a table a chess board is set out.* GUARDIANO, *who acts as a pander for the* DUKE, *has been telling* LIVIA *of the* DUKE'S *desire for* BIANCA; *and* LIVIA *is quite willing to help him to effect his purpose.*

LIV. How, sir? a gentlewoman so young, so fair,
As you set forth, spied from the widow's window? [11

GUAR. She.

LIV. Our Sunday-dinner woman?

GUAR. And Thursday-supper woman, the same still:
I know not how she came by her, but I'll swear
She's the prime gallant for a face in Florence,
And no doubt other parts follow their [20 leader.
The duke himself first spied her at the window,
Then, in a rapture—as if admiration
Were poor when it were single—beckoned me,
And pointed to the wonder warily,
As one that feared she would draw in her splendor
Too soon, if too much gazed at: I ne'er knew him [31
So infinitely taken with a woman;
Nor can I blame his appetite, or tax
His raptures of slight folly; she's a creature
Able to draw a state from serious business,
And make it their best piece to do her service.
What course shall we devise? has [40 spoke twice now.

LIV. Twice?

GUAR. 'Tis beyond your apprehensiön
How strangely that one look has catched his heart:
'Twould prove but too much worth in wealth and favor
To those should work his peace.

LIV. And if I do't not, [49
Or at least come as near it—if your art
Will take a little pains and second me—
As any wench in Florence of my standing,
I'll quite give o'er, and shut up shop in cunning.

GUAR. 'Tis for the duke; and, if I fail your purpose,
All means to come by riches or advancement
Miss me, and skip me over! [60

LIV. Let the old woman then
Be sent for with all speed; then I'll begin.

GUAR. A good conclusion follow, and a sweet one,
After this stale beginning with old ware!—
[*Calling.*] Within there!

Enter SERVANT.

SER. Sir, do you call?
GUAR. Come near; list hither. [70
[*Whispers.*
LIV. <I long myself to see this absolute creature,
That wins the heart of love and praise so much.>
GUAR. Go, sir, make haste.
LIV. Say I entreat her company:
Do you hear, sir?
SER. Yes, madam. [*Exit.*
LIV. That brings her quickly. [80
GUAR. I would 'twere done! the duke waits the good hour,
And I wait the good fortune that may spring from't.
I've had a lucky hand these fifteen year
At such court-passage[3] with three dice in a dish.—

Enter FABRICIO.

Signor Fabricio!
FAB. O sir, [90
I bring an alteration in my mouth now.
GUAR. An alteration? <No wise speech, I hope;
He means not to talk wisely, does he, trow?>
Good; what's the change, I pray, sir?
FAB. A new change.
GUAR. Another yet? faith, there's enough already. [99
FAB. My daughter loves him now.
GUAR. What, does she, sir?
FAB. Affects him beyond thought: who but the ward, forsooth?
No talk but of the ward; she would have him
To choose 'bove all the men she ever saw:
My will goes not so fast as her consent now;
Her duty gets before my command still.
GUAR. Why, then, sir, if you'll have me speak my thoughts, [111
I smell 'twill be a match.
FAB. Ay, and a sweet young couple,
If I have any judgment.
GUAR. <Faith, that's little.>
Let her be sent to-morrow, before noon,
And handsomely tricked up, for 'bout that time
I mean to bring her in, and tender her to him. [120
FAB. I warrant you for handsome; I will see
Her things laid ready, every one in order,
And have some part of her tricked up to-night.
GUAR. Why, well said.
FAB. 'Twas a use her mother had;
When she was invited to an early wedding,
She'd dress her head o'er night, sponge up herself, [131
And give her neck three lathers.
GUAR. <Ne'er a halter?>
FAB. On with her chain of pearl, her ruby bracelets,
Lay ready all her tricks and jiggembobs.
GUAR. So must your daughter.
FAB. I'll about it straight, sir. [*Exit.*
LIV. How he sweats in the foolish zeal of fatherhood, [140
After six ounces an hour, and seems
To toil as much as if his cares were wise ones!
GUAR. You've let his folly blood in the right vein, lady.
LIV. And here comes his sweet son-in-law that shall be;
They're both allied in wit before the marriage;
What will they be hereafter, when they're nearer! [151
Yet they can go no further than the fool;
There's the world's end in both of 'em.

Enter the WARD *and* SORDIDO, *one with a shittlecock, the other with a battledore.*

GUAR. Now, young heir.
WARD. What's the next business after shittlecock now?
GUAR. To-morrow you shall see the gentlewoman [161
Must be your wife.
WARD. There's even another thing too
Must be kept up with a pair of battledores:

[3] a game with dice.

My wife! what can she do?
GUAR. Nay, that's a question you should ask yourself, ward,
When you're alone together. [170
WARD. That's as I list:
A wife's to be asked anywhere, I hope;
I'll ask her in a congregatiön,
If I've a mind to't, and so save a license.
<My guardianer has no more wit than an herb-woman
That sells away all her sweet herbs and nosegays
And keeps a stinking breath for her own pottage.> [180
SOR. Let me be at the choosing of your beloved,
If you desire a woman of good parts.
WARD. Thou shalt, sweet Sordido.
SOR. I have a plaguy guess; let me alone to see what she is: if I but look upon her —'way! I know all the faults to a hair that you may refuse her for.
WARD. Dost thou? I prithee, let me hear 'em, Sordido. [190
SOR. Well, mark 'em, then; I have 'em all in rhyme:
The wife your guardianer ought to tender
Should be pretty, straight, and slender;
Her hair not short, her foot not long,
Her hand not huge, nor too, too loud her tongue;
No pearl in eye, nor ruby in her nose,
No burn or cut but what the catalogue shows; [201
She must have teeth, and that no black ones,
And kiss most sweet when she does smack once;
Her skin must be both white and plumped,
Her body straight, not hopper-rumped,
Or wriggle sideways like a crab;
She must be neither slut nor drab, [210
Nor go too splay-foot with her shoes,
To make her smock lick up the dews;
And two things more, which I forgot to tell ye,
She neither must have bump in back nor belly:
These are the faults that will not make her pass.
WARD. And, if I spy not these, I'm a rank ass. [220
SOR. Nay, more; by right, sir, you should see her naked,
For that's the ancient order.
WARD. See her naked?
That were good sport, i'faith: I'll have the books turned o'er,
And, if I find her naked on record,
She shall not have a rag on: but stay, stay;
How if she should desire to see me so too? [231
I were in a sweet case then; such a foul skin!
SOR. But you've a clean shirt, and that makes amends, sir.
WARD. I will not see her naked for that trick though. [*Exit.*
SOR. Then take her with all faults with her clothes on,
And they may hide a number with a bum-roll.[4] [241
Faith, choosing of a wench in a huge farthingale
Is like the buying of ware under a great pent-house;
What with the deceit of one,
And the false light of th' other, mark my speeches,
He may have a diseased wench in's bed,
And rotten stuff in's breeches. [*Exit.* [250
GUAR. It may take handsomely.
LIV. I see small hindrance.—

Re-enter SERVANT, *showing in* MOTHER.

How now? so soon returned?
GUAR. She's come.
LIV. That's well.— [*Exit* SERVANT.
Widow, come, come, I've a great quarrel to you;
Faith, I must chide you, that you must be sent for; [260
You make yourself so strange, never come at us,
And yet so near a neighbor, and so unkind;
Troth, you're to blame; you cannot be more welcome

[4] bustle.

To any house in Florence; that I'll tell you.
Moth. My thanks must needs acknowledge so much, madam.
Liv. How can you be so strange then? I sit here
Sometimes whole days together without company,
When business draws this gentleman from home,
And should be happy in society
Which I so well affect as that of yours.
I know you're alone too; why should not we,
Like two kind neighbors, then, supply the wants
Of one another, having tongue-discourse,
Experience in the world, and such kind helps
To laugh down time, and meet age merrily?
Moth. Age, madam! you speak mirth; 'tis at my door,
But a long journey from your ladyship yet.
Liv. My faith, I'm nine-and-thirty, every stroke, wench;
And—'tis a general observatiön
'Mongst knights—wives or widows, we account ourselves
Then old when young men's eyes leave looking at's;
'Tis a true rule amongst us, and ne'er failed yet
In any but in one, that I remember;
Indeed, she had a friend at nine-and-forty;
Marry, she paid well for him, and in th' end
He kept a quean or two with her own money,
That robbed her of her plate and cut her throat.
Moth. She had her punishment in this world, madam,
And a fair warning to all other women
That they live chaste at fifty.
Liv. Ay, or never, wench.
Come, now I have thy company, I'll not part with't
Till after supper.
Moth. Yes, I must crave pardon, madam.
Liv. I swear you shall stay supper; we've no strangers, woman,
None but my sojourners and I, this gentleman
And the young heir his ward; you know our company.
Moth. Some other time I'll make bold with you, madam.
Guar. Nay, pray stay, widow.
Liv. Faith, she shall not go:
Do you think I'll be forsworn?
Moth. 'Tis a great while
Till supper-time; I'll take my leave then now, madam,
And come again i' th' evening, since your ladyship
Will have it so.
Liv. I' th' evening? by my troth, wench,
I'll keep you while I have you: you've great business, sure,
To sit alone at home; I wonder strangely
What pleasure you take in't; were't to me now,
I should be ever at one neighbor's house
Or other all day long: having no charge,
Or none to chide you, if you go or stay,
Who may live merrier, ay, or more at heart's ease?
Come, we'll to chess or draughts; there are an hundred tricks
To drive out time till supper, never fear't, wench.
Moth. I'll but make one step home, and return straight, madam.
Liv. Come, I'll not trust you; you use more excuses
To your kind friends than ever I knew any.
What business can you have, if you be sure
You've locked the doors? and, that being all you have,
I know you're careful on't. One afternoon
So much to spend here! say I should entreat you now
To lie a night or two, or a week, with me,

Or leave your own house for a month together; [370
It were a kindness that long neighborhood
And friendship might well hope to prevail in;
Would you deny such a request? i'faith,
Speak truth, and freely.

MOTH. I were then uncivil, madam.

LIV. Go to then; set your men; we'll have whole nights [379
Of mirth together, ere we be much older, wench. [LIVIA *and* MOTHER *sit down to the chess-board.*

MOTH. <As good now tell her then, for she will know't;
I've always found her a most friendly lady.>

LIV. Why, widow, where's your mind?

MOTH. Troth, even at home, madam: [389
To tell you truth, I left a gentlewoman
Even sitting all alone, which is uncomfortable,
Especially to young bloods.

LIV. Another excuse!

MOTH. No; as I hope for health, madam, that's a truth:
Please you to send and see.

LIV. What gentlewoman? pish!

MOTH. Wife to my son, indeed; but not known, madam, [400
To any but yourself.

LIV. Now I beshrew you;
Could you be so unkind to her and me,
To come and not bring her? faith, 'tis not friendly.

MOTH. I feared to be too bold.

LIV. Too bold! O, what's become
Of the true hearty love was wont to be
'Mongst neighbors in old time! [409

MOTH. And she's a stranger, madam.

LIV. The more should be her welcome: when is courtesy
In better practice than when 'tis employed
In entertaining strangers? I could chide, i'faith:
Leave her behind, poor gentlewoman! alone too!
Make some amends, and send for her betimes; go. [420

MOTH. Please you, command one of your servants, madam.

LIV., *calling.* Within there!

Re-enter SERVANT.

SER. Madam.

LIV. Attend the gentlewoman.

MOTH. It must be carried wondrous privately
From my son's knowledge, he'll break out in storms else.— [430
Hark you, sir. [*Whispers to the* SERVANT, *who then goes out.*

LIV., *to* GUARDIANO. <Now comes in the heat of your part.

GUAR. True, I know't, lady; and, if I be out,
May the duke banish me from all employments,
Wanton or serious!>

LIV. So, have you sent, widow? [440

MOTH. Yes, madam, he's almost at home by this.

LIV. And, faith, let me entreat you that henceforward
All such unkind faults may be swept from friendship,
Which does but dim the lustre; and think thus much,
It is a wrong to me, that have ability
To bid friends welcome, when you keep 'em from me; [451
You cannot set greater dishonor near me;
For bounty is the credit and the glory
Of those that have enough. I see you're sorry,
And the good 'mends is made by't.

Re-enter SERVANT, *showing in* BIANCA.

MOTH. Here she is, madam.

[*Exit* SERVANT.

BIAN. <I wonder how she comes to send for me now.> [461

LIV. Gentlewoman, you're most welcome; trust me, you are,
As courtesy can make one, or respect
Due to the presence of you.

BIAN. I give you thanks, lady.

LIV. I heard you were alone, and't had appeared

An ill condition in me, though I knew you not,
Nor ever saw you—yet humanity
Thinks every case her own—t' have kept your company
Here from you, and left you all solitary:
I rather ventured upon boldness then,
As the least fault, and wished your presence here;
A thing most happily motioned of that gentleman,
Whom I request you, for his care and pity,
To honor and reward with your acquaintance;
A gentleman that ladies' rights stands for,
That's his profession.

BIAN. 'Tis a noble one,
And honors my acquaintance.

GUAR. All my intentions
Are servants to such mistresses.

BIAN. 'Tis your modesty,
It seems, that makes your deserts speak so low, sir.

LIV. Come, widow.—Look you, lady, here's our business; [*Pointing to the chess-board.*
Are we not well employed, think you? an old quarrel
Between us, that will ne'er be at an end.

BIAN. No? and, methinks, there's men enough to part you, lady.

LIV. Ho, but they set us on, let us come off
As well as we can, poor souls; men care no farther.
I pray, sit down, forsooth, if you've the patience
To look upon two weak and tedious gamesters.

GUAR. Faith, madam, set these by till evening,
You'll have enough on't then; the gentlewoman,
Being a stranger, would take more delight
To see your rooms and pictures.

LIV. Marry, good sir,
And well remembered; I beseech you, show 'em her,
That will beguile time well; pray heartily, do, sir,
I'll do as much for you: here, take these keys; [*Gives keys to* GUARDIANO.
Show her the monument too, and that's a thing
Every one sees not; you can witness that, widow.

MOTH. And that's worth sight indeed, madam.

BIAN. Kind lady,
I fear I came to be a trouble to you.

LIV. O, nothing less, forsooth!

BIAN. And to this courteous gentleman,
That wears a kindness in his breast, so noble
And bounteous to the welcome of a stranger.

GUAR. If you but give acceptance to my service,
You do the greatest grace and honor to me
That courtesy can merit.

BIAN. I were to blame else,
And out of fashion much. I pray you, lead, sir.

LIV. After a game or two, we're for you, gentlefolks.

GUAR. We wish no better seconds in society
Than your discourses, madam, and your partner's there.

MOTH. I thank your praise; I listened to you, sir,
Though, when you spoke, there came a paltry rook
Full in my way, and chokes up all my game. [*Exeunt* GUARDIANO *and* BIANCA.

LIV. Alas, poor widow, I shall be too hard for thee!

MOTH. You're cunning at the game, I'll be sworn, madam.

LIV. <It will be found so, ere I give you over.>
She that can place her man well—

MOTH. As you do, madam.

LIV. As I shall, wench, can never lose her game.
Nay, nay, the black king's mine.

MOTH. Cry you mercy, madam!
LIV. And this my queen.
MOTH. I see't now.
LIV. Here's the duke[5]
Will strike a sure stroke for the game anon;
Your pawn cannot come back to relieve itself.
MOTH. I know that, madam.
LIV. You play well the whilst.—
How she belies her skill!—I hold [580 two ducats,
I give you check and mate to your white king,
Simplicity itself, your saintish king there.
MOTH. Well, ere now, lady,
I've seen the fall of subtlety; jest on.
LIV. Ay, but simplicity receives two for one.
MOTH. What remedy but patience! [589

GUARDIANO *and* BIANCA *appear on the upper stage. This represents a gallery on the floor above that of the room where* LIVIA *and the* MOTHER *are playing chess. The two scenes proceed simultaneously; but the participants in neither can perceive or hear those in the other.*

BIAN. Trust me, sir,
Mine eye ne'er met with fairer ornaments.
GUAR. Nay, livelier, I'm persuaded neither Florence [600
Nor Venice can produce.
BIAN. Sir, my opinion
Takes your part highly.
GUAR. There's a better piece
Yet than all these.
BIAN. Not possible, sir!
GUAR. Believe it,
You'll say so when you see't: turn but your eye now, [609
You're upon't presently. [*Draws a curtain, and discovers the* DUKE; *then exit.*
BIAN. O sir!
DUKE. He's gone, beauty:
Pish, look not after him; he's but a vapor,
That, when the sun appears, is seen no more.
BIAN. O treachery to honor! [619

DUKE. Prithee, tremble not;
I feel thy breast shake like a turtle panting
Under a loving hand that makes much on't:
Why art so fearful? as I'm friend to brightness,
There's nothing but respect and honor near thee:
You know me, you have seen me; here's a heart [630
Can witness I have seen thee.
BIAN. The more's my danger.
DUKE. The more's thy happiness. Pish, strive not, sweet;
This strength were excellent employed in love now,
But here 'tis spent amiss: strive not to seek
Thy liberty, and keep me still in prison;
I'faith, you shall not out till I'm released now; [641
We'll be both freed together, or stay still by't;
So is captivity pleasant.
BIAN. O my lord!
DUKE. I am not here in vain; have but the leisure
To think on that, and thou'lt be soon resolved:
The lifting of thy voice is but like one [650
That does exalt his enemy, who, proving high,
Lays all the plots to confound him that raised him.
Take warning, I beseech thee; thou seem'st to me
A creature so composed of gentleness
And delicate meekness—such as bless the faces [659
Of figures that are drawn for goddesses,
And makes art proud to look upon her work—
I should be sorry the least force should lay
An unkind touch upon thee.
BIAN. O my extremity!
My lord, what seek you?
DUKE. Love.
BIAN. 'Tis gone already;
I have a husband. [670

[5] rook.

DUKE. That's a single comfort;
Take a friend to him.
BIAN. That's a double mischief,
Or else there's no religion.
DUKE. Do not tremble
At fears of thine own making.
BIAN. Nor, great lord,
Make me not bold with death and deeds of ruin, [679
Because they fear not you; me they must fright;
Then am I best in health: should thunder speak,
And none regard it, it had lost the name,
And were as good be still. I'm not like those
That take their soundest sleeps in greatest tempests;
Then wake I most, the weather fearfullest, [690
And call for strength to virtue.
DUKE. Sure, I think
Thou know'st the way to please me: I affect
A passionate pleading 'bove an easy yielding;
But never pitied any—they deserve none—
That will not pity me. I can command,
Think upon that; yet, if thou truly [700 knewest
The infinite pleasure my affection takes
In gentle, fair entreatings, when love's businesses
Are carried courteously 'twixt heart and heart,
You'd make more haste to please me.
BIAN. Why should you seek, sir,
To take away that you can never give?
DUKE. But I give better in exchange—wealth, honor; [711
She that is fortunate in a duke's favor
'Lights on a tree that bears all women's wishes:
If your own mother saw you pluck fruit there,
She would commend your wit, and praise the time
Of your nativity. Take hold of glory.
Do not I know you've cast away your life [721
Upon necessities, means merely doubtful
To keep you in indifferent health and fashion—
A thing I heard too lately, and soon pitied—
And can you be so much your beauty's enemy,
To kiss away a month or two in wedlock,
And weep whole years in wants for ever after? [731
Come, play the wise wench, and provide for ever;
Let storms come when they list, they find thee sheltered.
Should any doubt arise, let nothing trouble thee;
Put trust in our love for the managing
Of all to thy heart's peace: we'll walk together, [740
And show a thankful joy for both our fortunes. [*Exeunt* DUKE *and* BIANCA *above.*
LIV. Did not I say my duke would fetch you o'er, widow?
MOTH. I think you spoke in earnest when you said it, madam.
LIV. And my black king makes all the haste he can too. [749
MOTH. Well, madam, we may meet with him in time yet.
LIV. I've given thee blind mate twice.
MOTH. You may see, madam,
My eyes begin to fail.
LIV. I'll swear they do, wench.

Re-enter GUARDIANO.

GUAR. <I can but smile as often as I think on't:
How prettily the poor fool was beguiled!
How unexpectedly! it's a witty age; [760
Never were finer snares for women's honesties
Than are devised in these days; no spider's web
Made of a daintier thread than are now practised
To catch love's flesh-fly by the silver wing:
Yet, to prepare her stomach by degrees
To Cupid's feast, because I saw 'twas queasy, [770

I showed her naked pictures by the way,
A bit to stay the appetite. Well, advancement,
I venture hard to find thee; if thou com'st
With a greater title set upon thy crest,
I'll take that first cross patiently, and wait
Until some other comes greater than that;
I'll endure all.> [780

LIV. The game's even at the best now: you may see, widow,
How all things draw to an end.

MOTH. Even so do I, madam.

LIV. I pray, take some of your neighbors along with you.

MOTH. They must be those are almost twice your years then,
If they be chose fit matches for my time, madam. [790

LIV. Has not my duke bestirred himself?

MOTH. Yes, faith, madam;
Has done me all the mischief in this game.

LIV. Has showed himself in's kind.

MOTH. In's kind, call you it?
I may swear that.

LIV. Yes, faith, and keep your oath.

GUAR. <Hark, list! there's somebody coming down: 'tis she.> [801

Re-enter BIANCA.

BIAN. <Now bless me from a blasting! I saw that now,
Fearful for any woman's eye to look on;
Infectious mists and mildews hang at's eyes,
The weather of a doomsday dwells upon him:
Yet, since mine honor's leprous, why [810 should I
Preserve that fair that caused the leprosy?
Come, poison all at once.>—[*To* GUARDIANO.] <Thou in whose baseness
The bane of virtue broods, I'm bound in soul
Eternally to curse thy smooth-browed treachery,
That wore the fair veil of a friendly welcome, [821
And I a stranger; think upon't, 'tis worth it;
Murders piled up upon a guilty spirit,
At his last breath will not lie heavier
Than this betraying act upon thy conscience:
Beware of offering the first-fruits to sin;
His weight is deadly who commits with strumpets, [830
After they've been abased, and made for use;
If they offend to the death, as wise men know,
How much more they, then, that first make 'em so!
I give thee that to feed on. I'm made bold now,
I thank thy treachery; sin and I'm acquainted, [840
No couple greater; and I'm like that great one,
Who, making politic use of a base villain,
He likes the treason well, but hates the traitor.
So I hate thee, slave!

GUAR. Well, so the duke love me,
I fare not much amiss then: two great feasts
Do seldom come together in one day; [850
We must not look for 'em.>

BIAN. What, at it still, mother?

MOTH. You see we sit by't: are you so soon returned?

LIV. <So lively and so cheerful! a good sign that.>

MOTH. You have not seen all since, sure?

BIAN. That have I, mother, [859
The monument and all: I'm so beholding
To this kind, honest, courteous gentleman,
You'd little think it, mother; showed me all,
Had me from place to place so fashionably;
The kindness of some people, how't exceeds!
Faith, I've seen that I little thought to see. [870

I' the morning when I rose.
MOTH. Nay, so I told you
Before you saw't, it would prove worth your sight.—
I give you great thanks for my daughter, sir,
And all your kindness towards her.
GUAR. O, good widow,
Much good may't do her! <forty weeks hence, i'faith.>

Re-enter SERVANT.

LIV. Now, sir?
SER. May't please you, madam, to walk in;
Supper's upon the table.
LIV. Yes, we come.— [*Exit* SERVANT.
Will't please you, gentlewoman?
BIAN. Thanks, virtuous lady.
<You're a damned bawd.> I'll follow you, forsooth;
Pray, take my mother in. <An old ass go with you!>
This gentleman and I vow not to part.
LIV. Then get you both before.
BIAN. There lies his art.
[*Exeunt* BIANCA *and* GUARDIANO.
LIV. Widow, I'll follow you. [*Exit* MOTHER.] Is't so? "damned bawd!"
Are you so bitter? 'tis but want of use:
Her tender modesty is sea-sick a little,
Being not accustomed to the breaking billow
Of woman's wavering faith blown with temptations:
'Tis but a qualm of honor, 'twill away;
A little bitter for the time, but lasts not:
Sin tastes at the first draught like wormwood-water,
But, drunk again, 'tis nectar ever after.
[*Exit.*

ACT THREE

SCENE I

Some four or five days have elapsed. The MOTHER *is considerably perturbed by the change in* BIANCA, *who has become very difficult to please. The scene is a room in the* MOTHER'S *house.*

MOTH. I would my son would either keep at home,
Or I were in my grave!
She was but one day abroad, but ever since
She's grown so cutted,[1] there's no speaking to her:
Whether the sight of great cheer at my lady's,
And such mean fare at home, work discontent in her,
I know not; but I'm sure she's strangely altered.
I'll ne'er keep daughter-in-law i' th' house with me
Again, if I had an hundred: when read I of any
That agreed long together, but she and her mother
Fell out in the first quarter? nay, sometime
A grudging or a scolding the first week, by'r lady!
So takes the new disease, methinks, in my house:
I'm weary of my part; there's nothing likes her;
I know not how to please her here a' late:
And here she comes.

Enter BIANCA.

BIAN. This is the strangest house
For all defects as ever gentlewoman
Made shift withal to pass away her love in:
Why is there not a cushion-cloth of drawn-work,
Or some fair cut-work pinned up in my bed-chamber,
A silver and gilt casting-bottle[2] hung by't?
Nay, since I am content to be so kind to you,
To spare you for a silver basin and ewer,
Which one of my fashion looks for of duty,
She's never offered under where she sleeps.
MOTH. She talks of things here my whole state's not worth.
BIAN. Never a green silk quilt is there i' th' house, mother,

[1] touchy. [2] perfume-sprinkler.

To cast upon my bed!
MOTH. No, by troth, is there,
Nor orange-tawny neither.
BIAN. Here's a house
For a young gentlewoman to be got with child in!
MOTH. Yes, simple though you make it, there has been three
Got in a year in't, since you move me to't,
And all as sweet-faced children and as lovely
As you'll be mother of: I will not spare you.
What, cannot children be begot, think you,
Without gilt casting-bottles? yes, and as sweet ones:
The miller's daughter brings forth as white boys
As she that bathes herself with milk and bean-flour!
'Tis an old saying, "One may keep good cheer
In a mean house"; so may true love affect
After the rate of princes in a cottage.
BIAN. Troth, you speak wondrous well for your old house here;
'Twill shortly fall down at your feet, to thank you,
Or stoop, when you go to bed, like a good child,
To ask you blessing. Must I live in want
Because my fortune matched me with your son?
Wives do not give away themselves to husbands
To the end to be quite cast away; they look
To be the better used and tendered rather,
Highlier respected, and maintained the richer;
They're well rewarded else for the free gift
Of their whole life to a husband! I ask less now
Than what I had at home when I was a maid,
And at my father's house; kept short of that
Which a wife knows she must have, nay, and will—
Will, mother, if she be not a fool born;
And report went of me that I could wrangle
For what I wanted when I was two hours old;
And, by that copy, this land still I hold.
You hear me, mother? [*Exit.*
MOTH. Ay, too plain, methinks;
And, were I somewhat deafer when you spake,
'Twere ne'er a whit the worse for my quietness.
'Tis the most sudden'st, strangest alteration,
And the most subtlest that e'er wit at threescore
Was puzzled to find out: I know no cause for't; but
She's no more like the gentlewoman at first,
Than I'm like her that never lay with man yet;
And she's a very young thing, where'er she be.
When she first lighted here, I told her then
How mean she should find all things; she was pleased, forsooth,
None better: I laid open all defects to her;
She was contented still: but the devil's in her;
Nothing contents her now. To-night my son
Promised to be at home; would he were come once,
For I am weary of my charge, and life too!
She'd be served all in silver, by her good will,
By night and day; she hates the name of pewter[3]
More than sick men the noise, or diseased bones
That quake at fall o' th' hammer, seeming to have

[3] B, pewterer.

A fellow feeling with't at every blow.
What course shall I think on? she frets me so! [*Exit.*

Scene II

Leantio *is in the entrance hall of his* Mother's *house. He is just returned from his business trip and is looking forward to a warm welcome from his bride.*

Lean. How near am I now to a happiness
That earth exceeds not! not another like it:
The treasures of the deep are not so precious
As are the concealed comforts of a man
Locked up in woman's love. I scent the air
Of blessings when I come but near the house:
What a delicious breath marriage sends forth!
The violet-bed's not sweeter. Honest wedlock
Is like a banqueting-house built in a garden,
On which the spring's chaste flowers take delight
To cast their modest odors; when base lust,
With all her powders, paintings, and best pride,
Is but a fair house built by a ditch-side.
When I behold a glorious dangerous strumpet,
Sparkling in beauty and destruction too,
Both at a twinkling, I do liken straight
Her beautified body to a goodly temple
That's built on vaults where carcasses lie rotting;
And so, by little and little, I shrink back again,
And quench desire with a cool meditation;
And I'm as well methinks. Now for a welcome
Able to draw men's envies upon man;
A kiss now, that will hang upon my lip
As sweet as morning-dew upon a rose,
And full as long; after a five days' fast
She'll be so greedy now, and cling about me,
I take care how I shall be rid of her:
And here't begins.

Enter Bianca *and the* Mother.

Bian. O sir, you're welcome home!
Moth. <O, is he come? I'm glad on't.>
Lean. <Is that all?
Why, this is dreadful now as sudden death
To some rich man, that flatters all his sins
With promise of repentance when he's old,
And dies in the midway before he comes to't.>
Sure you're not well, Bianca; how dost, prithee?
Bian. I have been better than I am at this time.
Lean. Alas, I thought so!
Bian. Nay, I've been worse too
Than now you see me, sir.
Lean. I'm glad thou mend'st yet,
I feel my heart mend too: how came it to thee?
Has anything disliked thee in my absence?
Bian. No, certain; I have had the best content
That Florence can afford.
Lean. Thou mak'st the best on't.—
<Speak, mother; what's the cause? you must needs know.
Moth. Troth, I know none, son; let her speak herself;
Unless it be the same gave Lucifer
A tumbling cast; that's pride.>
Bian. Methinks this house stands nothing to my mind;
I'd have some pleasant lodging i' th' high street, sir;
Or if 'twere near the court, sir, that were much better:
'Tis a sweet recreation for a gentlewoman
To stand in a bay-window and see gallants.
Lean. Now I've another temper, a mere stranger

To that of yours, it seems; I should delight
To see none but yourself.
BIAN. I praise not that; [100
Too fond is as unseemly as too churlish:
I would not have a husband of that proneness
To kiss me before company for a world;
Beside, 'tis tedious to see one thing still, sir,
Be it the best that ever heart affected;
Nay, were't yourself, whose love had power, you know, [109
To bring me from my friends, I'd not stand thus
And gaze upon you always; troth, I could not, sir;
As good be blind and have no use of sight,
As look on one thing still: what's the eye's treasure
But change of objects? you are learnëd, sir,
And know I speak not ill: 'tis full as [120 virtuous
For woman's eye to look on several men,
As for her heart, sir, to be fixed on one.
LEAN. Now thou com'st home to me; a kiss for that word.
BIAN. No matter for a kiss, sir; let it pass;
'Tis but a toy, we'll not so much as mind it; [129
Let's talk of other business, and forget it.
What news now of the pirates? any stirring?
Prithee, discourse a little.
MOTH. <I'm glad he's here yet,
To see her tricks himself; I had lied monstrously
If I had told 'em first.>
LEAN. Speak, what's the humor, sweet,
You make your lip so strange? this was not wont. [141
BIAN. Is there no kindness betwixt man and wife,
Unless they make a pigeon-house of friendship,
And be still billing? 'tis the idlest fondness
That ever was invented, and 'tis pity
It's grown a fashion for poor gentlewomen; [150
There's many a disease kissed in a year by't,
And a French curtsy made to't: alas, sir!
Think of the world, how we shall live; grow serious;
We have been married a whole fortnight now.
LEAN. How? a whole fortnight! why, is that so long?
BIAN. 'Tis time to leave off dalliance; 'tis a doctrine [161
Of your own teaching, if you be remembered;
And I was bound to obey it.
MOTH. <Here's one fits him;
This was well catched, i'faith, son; like a fellow
That rids another country of a plague,
And brings it home with him to his own house.> [*Knocking within.* [170
Who knocks?
LEAN. Who's there now?—Withdraw you, Bianca;
Thou art a gem no stranger's eye must see,
Howe'er thou'rt pleased now to look dull on me. [*Exit* BIANCA.

Enter MESSENGER.

You're welcome, sir; to whom your business, pray? [180
MESS. To one I see not here now.
LEAN. Who should that be, sir?
MESS. A young gentlewoman I was sent to.
LEAN. A young gentlewoman?
MESS. Ay, sir, about sixteen: why look you wildly, sir?
LEAN. At your strange error; you've mistook the house, sir?
There's none such here, I assure you. [190
MESS. I assure you too
The man that sent me cannot be mistook.
LEAN. Why, who is't sent you, sir?
MESS. The duke.
LEAN. The duke?
MESS. Yes; he entreats her company at a banquet

At Lady Livia's house. [199
LEAN. Troth, shall I tell you, sir,
It is the most erroneous busïness
That e'er your honest pains was abused with;
I pray, forgive me if I smile a little;
I cannot choose, i'faith, sir, at an error
So comical as this. I mean no harm though.
His grace has been most wondrous ill informed:
Pray, so return it, sir. What should her name be? [211
MESS. That I shall tell you straight too—Bianca Capello.
LEAN. How, sir? Bianca? what do you call th' other?
MESS. Capello. Sir, it seems you know no such then?
LEAN. Who should this be? I never heard o' the name.
MESS. Then 'tis a sure mistake. [220
LEAN. What if you inquired
In the next street, sir? I saw gallants there
In the new houses that are built of late;
Ten to one there you find her.
MESS. Nay, no matter;
I will return the mistake, and seek no further.
LEAN. Use your own will and pleasure, sir, you're welcome. [*Exit* [230 MESSENGER. *The* MOTHER *locks the door after him.*
What shall I think of first?—Come forth, Bianca!

Re-enter BIANCA.

Thou art betrayed, I fear me.
BIAN. Betrayed! how, sir?
LEAN. The duke knows thee.
BIAN. Knows me! how know you that, sir? [240
LEAN. Has got thy name.
BIAN. <Ay, and my good name too;
That's worse o' the twain.>
LEAN. How comes this work about?
BIAN. How should the duke know me? can you guess, mother?
MOTH. Not I, with all my wits; sure we kept house close.
LEAN. Kept close! not all the locks in Italy [251
Can keep you women so; you have been gadding,
And ventured out at twilight to the court-green yonder,
And met the gallant bowlers coming home;
Without your masks too, both of you, I'll be hanged else:
Thou hast been seen, Bianca, by some stranger; [261
Never excuse it.
BIAN. I'll not seek the way, sir;
Do you think you've married me to mew me up,
Not to be seen? what would you make of me?
LEAN. A good wife, nothing else.
BIAN. Why, so are some
That are seen every day, else the devil take 'em. [271
LEAN. No more, then; I believe all virtuous in thee,
Without an argument; 'twas but thy hard chance
To be seen somewhere, there lies all the mischief:
But I've devised a riddance.
MOTH. Now I can tell you, son,
The time and place. [280
LEAN. When? where?
MOTH. What wits have I!
When you last took your leave, if you remember,
You left us both at window.
LEAN. Right, I know that.
MOTH. And not the third part of an hour after,
The duke passed by, in a great solemnity,
To St. Mark's temple, and, to my apprehension, [291
He looked up twice to the window.
LEAN. O, there quickened
The mischief of this hour!
BIAN. <If you call't mischief,
It is a thing I fear I am conceived with.>
LEAN. Looked he up twice, and could you take no warning?
MOTH. Why, once may do as much harm, son, as a thousand; [300

Do not you know one spark has fired an house
As well as a whole furnace?
LEAN. My heart flames for't;
Yet let's be wise, and keep all smothered closely;
I have bethought a means: is the door fast?
MOTH. I locked it myself after him.
LEAN. You know, mother, [310
At the end of the dark parlor there's a place
So artificially contrived for a conveyance
No search could ever find it; when my father
Kept in for manslaughter, it was his sanctuary;
There will I lock my life's best treasure up, [320
Bianca.
BIAN. Would you keep me closer yet?
Have you the conscience? you're best e'en choke me up, sir:
You make me fearful of your health and wits,
You cleave to such wild courses; what's the matter?
LEAN. Why, are you so insensible of your danger
To ask that now? the duke himself has sent for you [331
To Lady Livia's to a banquet, forsooth.
BIAN. Now I beshrew you heartily, has he so!
And you the man would never yet vouchsafe
To tell me on't till now? you show your loyalty
And honesty at once; and so farewell, sir! [340
LEAN. Bianca, whither now?
BIAN. Why, to the duke, sir;
You say he sent for me.
LEAN. But thou dost not mean
To go, I hope?
BIAN. No? I shall prove unmannerly,
Rude, and uncivil, mad, and imitate you!—
Come, mother, come, follow his humor no longer: [351
We shall be all executed for treason shortly.
MOTH. Not I, i'faith; I'll first obey the duke,
And taste of a good banquet; I'm of thy mind:
I'll step but up and fetch two handkerchiefs
To pocket up some sweetmeats, and o'ertake thee. [*Exit.* [361
BIAN. <Why, here's an old wench would trot into a bawd now
For some dry sucket,[4] or a colt in marchpane.> [*Exit.*
LEAN. O thou, the ripe time of man's misery, wedlock,
When all his thoughts, like overladen trees,
Crack with the fruits they bear, in [370
cares, in jealousies!
O, that's a fruit that ripens hastily,
After 'tis knit to marriage! it begins,
As soon as the sun shines upon the bride,
A little to show color. Blessëd powers,
Whence comes this alteration? the distractions,
The fears and doubts it brings, are numberless;
And yet the cause I know not. What a peace [381
Has he that never marries! if he knew
The benefit he enjoyed, or had the fortune
To come and speak with me, he should know then
Th' infinite wealth he had, and discern rightly
The greatness of his treasure by my loss:
Nay, what a quietness has he 'bove mine
That wears his youth out in a strumpet's arms, [391
And never spends more care upon a woman
Than at the time of lust; but walks away;
And, if he find her dead at his return,
His pity is soon done; he breaks a sigh
In many parts, and gives her but a piece on't;

[4] sweetmeat.

But all the fears, shames, jealousies, costs and troubles,
And still renewed cares of a marriage-bed,
Live in the issue, when the wife is dead.

Re-enter MESSENGER.

MESS. A good perfection to your thoughts!
LEAN. The news, sir?
MESS. Though you were pleased of late to pin an error on me,
You must not shift another in your stead too:
The duke has sent me for you.
LEAN. How! for me, sir?
<I see then 'tis my theft; we're both betrayed:
Well, I'm not the first has stol'n away a maid;
My countrymen have used it.> I'll along with you, sir. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

In a room in LIVIA'S *house a banquet is set out. The only persons present are* GUARDIANO *and the* WARD.

GUAR. Take you especial note of such a gentlewoman:
She's here on purpose; I've invited her,
Her father, and her uncle, to this banquet;
Mark her behavior well, it does concern you;
And what her good parts are, as far as time
And place can modestly require a knowledge of,
Shall be laid open to your understanding.
You know I'm both your guardian and your uncle;
My care of you is double, ward and nephew,
And I'll express it here.
WARD. Faith, I should know her
Now by her mark among a thousand women;
A little, pretty, deft, and tidy thing, you say?
GUAR. Right.
WARD. With a lusty sprouting sprig in her hair?
GUAR. Thou goest the right way still; take one mark more:
Thou shalt ne'er find her hand out of her uncle's,
Or else his out of hers, if she be near him;
The love of kindred never yet stuck closer
Than theirs to one another; he that weds her
Marries her uncle's heart too.
WARD. Say you so, sir?
Then I'll be asked i' the church to both of them. [*Cornets within.*
GUAR. Fall back; here comes the duke.
WARD. He brings a gentlewoman; I should fall forward rather.

Enter the DUKE *leading in* BIANCA, FABRICIO, HIPPOLITO, LIVIA, MOTHER, ISABELLA, *Gentlemen, and Attendants.*

DUKE. Come, Bianca,
Of purpose sent into the world to show
Perfection once in woman; I'll believe
Henceforward they have every one a soul too,
'Gainst all the uncourteous opiniöns
That man's uncivil rudeness ever held of 'em:
Glory of Florence, light into mine arms!
BIAN. Yon comes a grudging man will chide you, sir;

Enter LEANTIO.

The storm is now in's heart, and would get nearer,
And fall here, if it durst; it pours down yonder.
DUKE. If that be he, the weather shall soon clear;
List, and I'll tell thee how. [*Whispers to* BIANCA.
LEAN. <A-kissing too!
I see 'tis plain lust now, adultery 'boldened;
What will it prove anon, when 'tis stuffed full
Of wine and sweetmeats, being so impudent fasting?>

DUKE. We've heard of your good parts, sir, which we honor
With our embrace and love.—Is not the captainship
Of Rouans' citadel, since the late deceased,
Supplied by any yet?
GENTLEMAN. By none, my lord.
DUKE. Take it, the place is yours then; and, as faithfulness
And desert grows, our favor shall grow with't: [LEANTIO *kneels.*
Rise now, the captain of our fort at Rouans.
LEAN., *rising.* The service of whole life give your grace thanks!
DUKE. Come, sit, Bianca. [DUKE, BIANCA, *&c., seat themselves.*
LEAN. <This is some good yet,
And more than e'er I looked for; a fine bit
To stay a cuckold's stomach: all preferment
That springs from sin and lust, it shoots up quickly,
As gardeners' crops do in the rotten'st grounds;
So is all means raised from base prostitution
Even like a salad growing upon a dunghill.
I'm like a thing that never was yet heard of,
Half merry and half mad; much like a fellow
That eats his meat with a good appetite,
And wears a plague-sore that would fright a country;
Or, rather, like the barren,[5] hardened ass,
That feeds on thistles till he bleeds again;
And such is the condition of my misery.>
LIV. Is that your son, widow?
MOTH. Yes; did your ladyship
Never know that till now?
LIV. No, trust me, did I;
<Nor ever truly felt the power of love
And pity to a man, till now I knew him.
I have enough to buy me my desires,
And yet to spare, that's one good comfort.> Hark you,
Pray, let me speak with you, sir, before you go.
LEAN. With me, lady? you shall; I'm at your service.
<What will she say now, trow? more goodness yet?>
WARD. I see her now, I'm sure; the ape's so little,
I shall scarce feel her; I have seen almost
As tall as she sold in the fair for tenpence:
See how she simpers it, as if marmalade
Would not melt in her mouth! she might have the kindness, i'faith,
To send me a gilded bull from her own trencher,
A ram, a goat, or somewhat to be nibbling:
These women, when they come to sweet things once,
They forget all their friends, they grow so greedy,
Nay, oftentimes their husbands.
DUKE. Here's a health now, gallants,
To the best beauty at this day in Florence.
BIAN. Whoe'er she be, she shall not go unpledged, sir.
DUKE. Nay, you're excused for this.
BIAN. Who, I, my lord?
DUKE. Yes, by the law of Bacchus; plead your benefit,
You are not bound to pledge your own health, lady.
BIAN. That's a good way, my lord, to keep me dry.
DUKE. Nay, then, I'll not offend Venus so much,
Let Bacchus seek his 'mends in another court.
Here's to thyself, Bianca. [DUKE *and others drink.*
BIAN. Nothing comes
More welcome to that name than your grace.
LEAN. <So, so;
Here stands the poor thief now that stole the treasure,

[5] stupid.

And he's not thought on. Ours is near kin now
To a twin-misery born into the world;
First the hard-conscienced worldling, he hoards wealth up,
Then comes the next, and he feasts all upon't; [181
One's damned for getting, th' other for spending on't.
O equal justice, thou hast met my sin
With a full weight! I'm rightly now oppressed;
All her friends' heavy hearts lie in my breast.>

DUKE. Methinks there is no spirit 'mongst us, gallants, [190
But what divinely sparkles from the eyes
Of bright Bianca; we sat all in darkness,
But for that splendor. Who was't told us lately
Of a match-making rite, a marriage-tender?

GUAR. 'Twas I, my lord.

DUKE. 'Twas you indeed. Where is she?

GUAR. This is the gentlewoman. [200

FAB. My lord, my daughter.

DUKE. Why, here's some stirring yet.

FAB. She's a dear child to me.

DUKE. That must needs be; you say she is your daughter.

FAB. Nay, my good lord, dear to my purse, I mean;
Beside my person, I ne'er reckoned that.
Sh'as the full qualities of a gentlewoman;
I've brought her up to music, dancing, what not, [211
That may commend her sex and stir her husband.

DUKE. And which is he now?

GUAR. This young heir, my lord.

DUKE. What is he brought up to?

HIP. <To cat and trap.>

GUAR. My lord, he's a great ward, wealthy but simple.
His part consists in acres. [220

DUKE. O, wise-acres.

GUAR. You've spoke him in a word, sir.

BIAN. <'Las, poor gentlewoman!
She's ill-bestead, unless sh'as dealt the wiselier,
And laid in more provision for her youth;
Fools will not keep in summer.

LEAN. No, nor such wives
From whores in winter.>

DUKE, *replying to a remark of* FABRICIO. Yea, the voice too, sir? [231

FAB. Ay, and a sweet breast[6] too, my lord, I hope,
Or I have cast away my money wisely;
She took her pricksong[7] earlier, my lord,
Than any of her kindred ever did;
A rare child, though I say't: but I'd not have
The baggage hear so much; 'twould make her swell straight; [240
And maids, of all things, must not be puffed up.

DUKE. Let's turn us to a better banquet, then;
For music bids the soul of man to a feast;
And that's indeed a noble entertainment,
Worthy Bianca's self: you shall perceive, beauty,
Our Florentine damsels are not brought up idly. [251

BIAN. They're wiser of themselves, it seems, my lord,
And can take gifts when goodness offers 'em.

LEAN. <True, and damnation has taught you that wisdom; [*Music.*
You can take gifts too. O, that music mocks me!>

LIV. <I am as dumb to any language now [261
But love's, as one that never learned to speak.
I am not yet so old but he may think of me;
My own fault, I've been idle a long time;
But I'll begin the week, and paint to-morrow,
So follow my true labor day by day;
I never thrived so well as when I used it.> [271

ISA., *singing.*

What harder chance can fall to woman,
Who was born to cleave to some man,
Than to bestow her time, youth, beauty,
Life's observance, honor, duty,

[6] voice. [7] written harmony.

On a thing for no use good
But to make physic work, or blood
Force fresh in an old lady's cheek? [8]
She that would be [280
Mother of fools, let her compound with me.

WARD. <Here's a tune indeed! pish,
I had rather hear one ballad sung i' the nose now
Of the lamentable drowning of fat sheep and oxen,
Than all these simpering tunes played upon cat's-guts,
And sung by little kitlings.> [290
FAB. How like you her breast now, my lord?
BIAN. <Her breast?
He talks as if his daughter had given suck
Before she were married, as her betters have;
The next he praises sure will be her nipples.> [299
DUKE, *to* BIANCA. <Methinks now such a husband
Is like the jewel of unvalued worth
Hung at a fool's ear.>
FAB. May it please your grace
To give her leave to show another quality?
DUKE. Marry, as many good ones as you will, sir;
The more the better welcome.
LEAN. <But the less [310
The better practised: that soul's black indeed
That cannot commend virtue; but who keeps it?
Th' extortioner will say to a sick beggar,
"Heaven comfort thee!" though he give none himself;
This good is common.>
FAB., *to* GUARDIANO. Will it please you now, sir, [320
To entreat your ward to take her by the hand,
And lead her in a dance before the duke?
GUAR. That will I, sir; 'tis needful.—Hark you, nephew. [*Whispers to* WARD.

FAB. Nay, you shall see, young heir, what you've for your money,
Without fraud or imposture.
WARD. Dance with her? [330
Not I, sweet guardianer, do not urge my heart to't,
'Tis clean against my blood; dance with a stranger?
Let who will do't, I'll not begin first with her.
HIP. <No, fear't not, fool; sh'as took a better order.>
GUAR. Why, who shall take her then?
WARD. Some other gentleman: [340
Look, there's her uncle, a fine-timbered reveller;
Perhaps he knows the manner of her dancing too;
I'll have him do't before me—I've sworn, guardianer—
Then may I learn the better.
GUAR. Thou'lt be an ass still!
WARD. Ay, all that, uncle, shall not fool me out; [350
Pish, I stick closer to myself than so.
GUAR. I must entreat you, sir, to take your niece
And dance with her; my ward's a little wilful:
He'd have you show him the way.
HIP. Me, sir? he shall
Command it at all hours; pray, tell him so.
GUAR. I thank you for him; he has not wit, himself, sir. [361
HIP. Come, my life's peace. <I've a strange office on't here:
'Tis some man's luck to keep the joys he likes
Concealed for his own bosom, but my fortune
To set 'em out now for another's liking;
Like the mad misery of necessitous man,
That parts from his good horse with many praises, [371
And goes on foot himself: need must be obeyed
In every action; it mars man and maid.>

[8] At least a line would seem to have dropped out here—probably a line and a half.

[*Music.* HIPPOLITO *and* ISABELLA *dance, making obeisance to the* DUKE, *and to each other, both before and after the dance.*

DUKE. Signor Fabricio, you're a happy father;

Your cares and pains are fortunate, you see,
Your cost bears noble fruits.—Hippolito, thanks.

FAB. <Here's some amends for all my charges yet;
She wins both prick and praise where'er she comes.>

DUKE. <How lik'st, Bianca?

BIAN. All things well, my lord,
But this poor gentlewoman's fortune, that's the worst.

DUKE. There is no doubt, Bianca, she'll find leisure
To make that good enough; he's rich and simple.

BIAN. She has the better hope o' th' upper hand, indeed,
Which women strive for most.>

GUAR. Do't when I bid you, sir.

WARD. I'll venture but a hornpipe with her, guardianer,
Or some such married man's dance.

GUAR. Well, venture something, sir.

WARD. I have rhyme for what I do.

GUAR. But little reason, I think.

WARD. Plain men dance the measures, the cinquapace, the gay;
Cuckolds dance the hornpipe, and farmers dance the hay;
Your soldiers dance the round, and maidens that grow big;
Your drunkards, the canaries; your whore and bawd, the jig.
Here's your eight kind of dancers; he that finds the ninth let him pay the minstrels.

DUKE. O, here he appears once in his own person;
I thought he would have married her by attorney,
And lain with her so too.

BIAN. Nay, my kind lord,
There's very seldom any found so foolish
To give away his part there.

LEAN. <Bitter scoff!
Yet I must do't! with what a cruel pride
The glory of her sin strikes by my afflictions!> [*The* WARD *and* ISABELLA *dance; he ridiculously imitating* HIPPOLITO.

DUKE. <This thing will make shift, sirs, to make a husband,
For aught I see in him.—How think'st, Bianca?

BIAN. Faith, an ill-favored shift, my lord, methinks;
If he would take some voyage when he's married,
Dangerous, or long enough, and scarce be seen
Once in nine year together, a wife then
Might make indifferent shift to be content with him.

DUKE. A kiss; [*kisses her*] that wit deserves to be made much on.>
Come, our caroch!

GUAR. Stands ready for your grace.

DUKE. My thanks to all your loves.—
Come, fair Bianca,
We have took special care of you, and provided
Your lodging near us now.

BIAN. Your love is great, my lord.

DUKE. Once more, our thanks to all.

OMNES. All blest honors guard you!

[*Cornets flourishing, exeunt all but* LEANTIO *and* LIVIA.

LEAN. <O hast thou left me then, Bianca, utterly?
Bianca, now I miss thee! O, return,
And save the faith of woman! I ne'er felt
The loss of thee till now; 'tis an affliction
Of greater weight than youth was made to bear;
As if a punishment of after-life
Were fall'n upon man here, so new it is
To flesh and blood, so strange, so insupportable;
A torment even mistook, as if a body
Whose death were drowning, must needs therefore suffer it
In scalding oil.>

LIV. Sweet sir—

LEAN. <As long as mine eye saw thee,
I half enjoyed thee.>
LIV. Sir— [479
LEAN. <Canst thou forget
The dear pains my love took? how it has watched
Whole nights together, in all weathers, for thee,
Yet stood in heart more merry than the tempest
That sung about mine ears—like dangerous flatterers,
That can set all their mischief to sweet tunes— [490
And then received thee, from thy father's window,
Into these arms at midnight, when we embraced
As if we had been statues only made for't,
To show art's life, so silent were our comforts,
And kissed as if our lips had grown together?> [499
LIV. <This makes me madder to enjoy him now.>
LEAN. <Canst thou forget all this, and better joys
That we met after this, which then new kisses
Took pride to praise?>
LIV. <I shall grow madder yet.> Sir—
LEAN. <This cannot be but of some close bawd's working.> [510
Cry mercy, lady! what would you say to me?
My sorrow makes me so unmannerly,
So comfort bless me, I had quite forgot you.
LIV. Nothing, but even, in pity to that passion,[9]
Would give your grief good counsel.
LEAN. Marry, and welcome, lady;
It never could come better. [520
LIV. Then first, sir,
To make away all your good thoughts at once of her,
Know most assuredly she is a strumpet.
LEAN. Ha! "most assuredly"? speak not a thing
So vile so certainly; leave it more doubtful.
LIV. Then I must leave all truth, and spare my knowledge, [530
A sin which I too lately found and wept for.
LEAN. Found you it?
LIV. Ay, with wet eyes.
LEAN. O perjurious friendship!
LIV. You missed your fortunes when you met with her, sir.
Young gentlemen that only love for beauty,
They love not wisely; such a marriage rather [541
Proves the destruction of affectiön;
It brings on want, and want's the key of whoredom.
I think y'had small means with her?
LEAN. O, not any, lady.
LIV. Alas, poor gentleman! what meant'st thou, sir,
Quite to undo thyself with thine own kind heart? [550
Thou art too good and pitiful to woman:
Marry, sir, thank thy stars for this blest fortune,
That rids the summer of thy youth so well
From many beggars, that had lain a-sunning
In thy beams only else, till thou hadst wasted
The whole days of thy life in heat and labor. [561
What would you say now to a creature found
As pitiful to you, and, as it were,
Even sent on purpose from the whole sex general,
To requite all that kindness you have shown to't?
LEAN. What's that, madam?
LIV. Nay, a gentlewoman, and one able [571
To reward good things, ay, and bears a conscience to't:
Couldst thou love such a one, that, blow all fortunes,
Would never see thee want?

[9] sorrow.

Nay, more, maintain thee to thine enemy's envy,
And shall not spend a care for't, stir a thought,
Nor break a sleep? unless love's music waked thee,
No storm of fortune should: look upon me,
And know that woman.

LEAN. O my life's wealth, Bianca!

LIV. <Still with her name? will nothing wear it out?>
That deep sigh went but for a strumpet, sir.

LEAN. It can go for no other that loves me.

LIV. <He's vexed in mind: I came too soon to him;
Where's my discretion now, my skill, my judgment?
I'm cunning in all arts but my own love.
'Tis as unseasonable to tempt him now
So soon, as for a widow to be courted
Following her husband's corse, or to make bargain
By the grave-side, and take a young man there:
Her strange departure stands like a hearse yet
Before his eyes, which time will take down shortly.> [*Exit.*

LEAN. Is she my wife till death, yet no more mine?
That's a hard measure: then what's marriage good for?
Methinks, by right I should not now be living,
And then 'twere all well. What a happiness
Had I been made of, had I never seen her!
For nothing makes man's loss grievous to him
But knowledge of the worth of what he loses;
For what he never had he never misses.
She's gone for ever, utterly; there is
As much redemption of a soul from hell,
As a fair woman's body from his palace.
Why should my love last longer than her truth?
What is there good in woman to be loved,
When only that which makes her so has left her?
I cannot love her now, but I must like
Her sin and my own shame too, and be guilty
Of law's breach with her, and mine own abusing;
All which were monstrous: then my safest course,
For health of mind and body, is to turn
My heart and hate her, most extremely hate her;
I have no other way: those virtuous powers,
Which were chaste witnesses of both our troths,
Can witness she breaks first. And I'm rewarded
With captainship o' the fort; a place of credit,
I must confess, but poor; my factorship
Shall not exchange means with't: he that died last in't,
He was no drunkard, yet he died a beggar,
For all his thrift: besides, the place not fits me;
It suits my resolution, not my breeding.

Re-enter LIVIA.

LIV. <I've tried all ways I can, and have not power
To keep from sight of him.> How are you now, sir?

LEAN. I feel a better ease, madam.

LIV. Thanks to blessedness!
You will do well, I warrant you, fear't not, sir,
Join but your own good will to't: he's not wise
That loves his pain or sickness, or grows fond
Of a disease whose property is to vex him
And spitefully drink his blood up: out upon't, sir!
Youth knows no greater loss. I pray, let's walk, sir;
You never saw the beauty of my house yet,
Nor how abundantly fortune has blest me

In worldly treasure; trust me, I've enough, sir,
To make my friend a rich man in my life,
A great man at my death; yourself will say so.
If you want anything, and spare to speak,
Troth, I'll condemn you for a wilful man, sir.
LEAN. Why, sure,
This can be but the flattery of some dream.
LIV. Now, by this kiss, my love, my soul, and riches,
'Tis all true substance! [*Kisses him.*
Come, you shall see my wealth; take what you list;
The gallanter you go, the more you please me:
I will allow you too your page and footman,
Your race-horses, or any various pleasure
Exercised youth delights in; but to me
Only, sir, wear your heart of constant stuff;
Do but you love enough, I'll give enough.
LEAN. Troth, then, I'll love enough, and take enough.
LIV. Then we are both pleased enough.

SCENE IV

GUARDIANO *has taken the* WARD (*who is accompanied by* SORDIDO) *to* FABRICIO'S *house that he may take stock of* ISABELLA. *Into the room where the* WARD *and* SORDIDO *are waiting,* GUARDIANO *brings* ISABELLA.

She remains at one side, while he goes over to speak to his WARD.

GUAR. <Now, nephew, here's the gentlewoman again.
WARD. Mass, here she's come again! mark her now, Sordido.
GUAR. This is the maid my love and care has chose
Out for your wife; and so I tender her to you.
Yourself has been eye-witness of some qualities
That speak a courtly breeding and are costly:
I bring you both to talk together now;
'Tis time you grew familiar in your tongues,
To-morrow you join hand, and one ring ties you,
And one bed holds you; if you like the choice,
Her father and her friends are i' the next room,
And stay to see the contract ere they part:
Therefore, despatch, good ward, be sweet and short;
Like her, or like her not, there's but two ways,
And one your body, th' other your purse pays.
WARD. I warrant you, guardianer, I'll not stand all day thrumming,
But quickly shoot my bolt at your next coming.
GUAR. Well said: good fortune to your birding then! [*Exit.*
WARD. I never missed mark yet.
SOR. Troth, I think, master, if the truth were known,
You never shot at any but the kitchen wench,
And that was a she-woodcock,[10] a mere innocent,[11]
That was oft lost and cried[12] at eight-and-twenty.
WARD. No more of that meat, Sordido, here's eggs o' the spit now;
We must turn gingerly: draw out the catalogue
Of all the faults of women.
SOR. How? all the faults? have you so little reason, to think so much paper will lie in my breeches? why, ten carts will not carry it, if you set down but the bawds. All the faults? pray, let's be content with a few of 'em; and, if they were less, you would find 'em enough, I warrant you, look you, sir.>
ISA. <But that I have th' advantage of the fool,
As much as woman's heart can wish and joy at,
What an infernal torment 'twere to be

[10] simpleton. [11] idiot.
[12] cried by the public crier.

Thus bought and sold, and turned and pried into,
When, alas,
The worst bit's too good for him! and the comfort is,
Has but a cater's[13] place on't, and provides
All for another's table: yet how curious
The ass is! like some nice professor on't,
That buys up all the daintiest food i' the markets, [81
And seldom licks his lips after a taste on't.>

Sor. <Now to her, now you've scanned all her parts over.

Ward. But at which end shall I begin now, Sordido?

Sor. O, ever at a woman's lip, while you live, sir; do you ask that question?

Ward. Methinks, Sordido, sh'as but a crabbed face to begin with. [91

Sor. A crabbed face? that will save money.

Ward. How? save money, Sordido?

Sor. Ay, sir; for, having a crabbed face of her own, she'll eat the less verjuice[14] with her mutton; 'twill save verjuice at year's end, sir.

Ward. Nay, an your jests begin to be saucy once, I'll make you eat your meat without mustard. [101

Sor. And that in some kind is a punishment.>

Ward. Gentlewoman, they say 'tis your pleasure to be my wife, and you shall know shortly whether it be mine or no to be your husband; and thereupon thus I first enter upon you. [*Kisses her.*] <O most delicious scent! methinks it tasted as if a man had stepped into a comfit- [110 maker's shop to let a cart go by, all the while I kissed her.> It is reported, gentlewoman, you'll run mad for me, if you have me not.

Isa. I should be in great danger of my wits, sir,
For being so forward. <Should this ass kick backward now!>

Ward. Alas, poor soul! and is that hair your own? [120

Isa. My own? yes, sure, sir; I owe nothing for't.

Ward. 'Tis a good hearing; I shall have the less to pay when I have married you.—[*To* Sordido.] <Look, does her eyes stand well?

Sor. They cannot stand better than in her head, I think: where would you have them? and, for her nose, 'tis of a very good last. [130

Ward. I have known as good as that has not lasted a year though.

Sor. That's in the using of a thing; will not any strong bridge fall down in time, if we do nothing but beat at the bottom? a nose of buff would not last always, sir, especially if it came into the camp once.

Ward. But, Sordido, how shall we do to make her laugh, that I may see [140 what teeth she has? for I'll not bate her a tooth, nor take a black one into the bargain.

Sor. Why, do but you fall in talk with her, you cannot choose but, one time or other, make her laugh, sir.

Ward. It shall go hard but I will.> Pray, what qualities have you beside singing and dancing? can you play at shittlecock, forsooth? [150

Isa. Ay, and at stool-ball too, sir; I've great luck at it.

Ward. Why, can you catch a ball well?

Isa. I have catched two in my lap at one game.

Ward. What! have you, woman? I must have you learn
To play at trap too, then you're full and whole.

Isa. Anything that you please to bring me up to [161
I shall take pains to practise.

Ward. <'Twill not do, Sordido;
We shall ne'er get her mouth opened wide enough.

Sor. No, sir? that's strange; then here's a trick for your learning. [Sordido *yawns;* Isabella *starts to yawn also.* [169
Look now, look now! quick, quick there!

[13] caterer's.
[14] sauce made from crab-apples.

[*But the* Ward *cannot be quick enough, because* Isabella *covers her mouth with a handkerchief.*

Ward. Pox of that scurvy mannerly trick with handkerchief!
It hindered me a little; but I'm satisfied:
When a fair woman gapes, and stops her mouth so,
It shows like a cloth-stopple in a cream-pot:
I have fair hope of her teeth now, Sordido.

Sor. Why, then, you've all well, sir! for aught I see,
She's right and straight enough now as she stands:
They'll commonly lie crooked, that's no matter;
Wise gamesters
Never find fault with that, let 'em lie still so.

Ward. I'd fain mark how she goes, and then I have all; for of all creatures I cannot abide a splay-footed woman; she's an unlucky thing to meet in a morning; her heels keep together so, as if she were beginning an Irish dance still, and the wriggling of her bum playing the tune to't: but I have bethought a cleanly shift to find it: dab down as you see me, and peep of one side when her back's towards you. I'll show you the way.

Sor. And you shall find find me apt enough to peeping;
I have been one of them has seen mad sights
Under your scaffolds.>

Ward. Will't please you walk, forsooth,
A turn or two by yourself? you're so pleasing to me,
I take delight to view you on both sides.

Isa. I shall be glad to fetch a walk to your love, sir;
'Twill get affection a good stomach, sir,—
<Which I had need have to fall to such coarse victuals.> [Isabella *walks, while the* Ward *and* Sordido *stoop down to look at her.*

Ward. <Now go thy ways for a clean-treading wench,
As ever man in modesty peeped under!

Sor. I see the sweetest sight to please my master!
Never went Frenchman righter upon ropes
Than she on Florentine rushes.

Ward. 'Tis enough, forsooth.>

Isa. And how do you like me now, sir?

Ward. Faith, so well,
I never mean to part with thee, sweetheart,
Under some sixteen children, and all boys.

Isa. You'll be at simple pains, if you prove kind,
And breed 'em all in your teeth.

Ward. Nay, by my faith,
What serves your belly for? 'twould make my cheeks
Look like blown bagpipes.

Re-enter Guardiano.

Guar. How now, ward and nephew,
Gentlewoman and niece! speak, is it so or not?

Ward. 'Tis so; we're both agreed, sir.

Guar. In to your kindred then;
There's friends and wine and music waits to welcome you.

Ward. Then I'll be drunk for joy.

Sor. And I for company;
I cannot break my nose in a better action. [*Exeunt.*

ACT FOUR

Scene I

It is evening. Bianca *is in the handsome lodgings provided for her by the* Duke. *She is attended by two* Ladies.

Bian. How go your watches, ladies! what's o'clock now?

1 L. By mine, full nine.

2 L. By mine, a quarter past.

1 L. I set mine by St. Mark's.

2 L. St. Anthony's, they say,
Goes truer.

1 L. That's but your opinion, madam,
Because you love a gentleman o' the name.

2 L. He's a true gentleman then.

1 L. So may he be
That comes to me to-night, for aught you know.
BIAN. I'll end this strife straight: I set mine by the sun;
I love to set by the best; one shall not then
Be troubled to set often.
2 L. You do wisely in't.
BIAN. If I should set my watch, as some girls do
By every clock i' the town, 'twould ne'er go true;
And too much turning of the dial's point,
Or tampering with the spring, might in small time
Spoil the whole work too; here it wants of nine now.
1 L. It does indeed, forsooth; mine's nearest truth yet.
2 L. Yet I've found her lying with an advocate, which showed
Like two false clocks together in one parish.
BIAN. So now I thank you, ladies; I desire
Awhile to be alone.
1 L. And I am nobody,
Methinks, unless I've one or other with me.
<Faith, my desire and hers will ne'er be sisters.> [*Exeunt* LADIES.
BIAN. How strangely woman's fortune comes about!
This was the farthest way to come to me,
All would have judged that knew me born in Venice,
And there with many jealous eyes brought up,
That never thought they had me sure enough
But when they were upon me; yet my hap
To meet it here, so far off from my birthplace,
My friends, or kindred! 'tis not good, in sadness,[1]
To keep a maid so strict in her young days;
Restraint
Breeds wandering thoughts, as many fasting days
A great desire to see flesh stirring again:
I'll ne'er use any girl of mine so strictly;
Howe'er they're kept, their fortunes find 'em out;
I see't in me: if they be got in court,
I'll ne'er forbid 'em the country; nor the court,
Though they be born i' the country: they will come to't,
And fetch their falls a thousand mile about,
Where one would little think on't.

Enter LEANTIO, *richly dressed.*

LEAN. <I long to see how my despiser looks
Now she's come here to court: these are her lodgings;
She's simply now advanced: I took her out
Of no such window, I remember, first;
That was a great deal lower, and less carved.>
BIAN. <How now! what silkworm's this, i' the name of pride?
What, is it he?>
LEAN. A bow i' th' ham to your greatness;
You must have now three legs,[2] I take it, must you not?
BIAN. Then I must take another, I shall want else
The service I should have; you have but two there.
LEAN. You're richly placed.
BIAN. Methinks you're wondrous brave,[3] sir.
LEAN. A sumptuous lodging.
BIAN. You've an excellent suit there.
LEAN. A chair of velvet.
BIAN. Is your cloak lined through, sir?
LEAN. You're very stately here.
BIAN. Faith, something proud, sir.
LEAN. Stay, stay, let's see your cloth-of-silver slippers.
BIAN. Who's your shoemaker? has made you a neat boot.

[1] seriousness. [2] bows. [3] well-dressed.

LEAN. Will you have a pair? the duke will lend you spurs.
BIAN. Yes, when I ride.
LEAN. 'Tis a brave life you lead.
BIAN. I could ne'er see you in such good clothes
In my time.
LEAN. In your time?
BIAN. Sure I think, sir,
We both thrive best asunder.
LEAN. You're a whore!
BIAN. Fear nothing, sir.
LEAN. An impudent, spiteful strumpet!
BIAN. O, sir, you give me thanks for your captainship!
I thought you had forgot all your good manners.
LEAN. And, to spite thee as much, look there; there read; [*Giving letter.*
Vex, gnaw; thou shalt find there I'm not love-starved.
The world was never yet so cold or pitiless
But there was ever still more charity found out
Than at one proud fool's door; and 'twere hard, faith,
If I could not pass that. Read to thy shame there;
A cheerful and a beauteous benefactor too,
As e'er erected the good works of love. [*She reads.*
BIAN. <Lady Livia!
Is't possible? her worship was my pandress;
She dote, and send, and give, and all to him!
Why, here's a bawd plagued home!>
You're simply happy, sir;
Yet I'll not envy you.
LEAN. No, court-saint, not thou!
You keep some friend of a new fashiön:
There's no harm in your devil, he's a suckling;
But he will breed teeth shortly, will he not?
BIAN. Take heed you play not too long with him.
LEAN. Yes, and the great one too: I shall find time
To play a hot religious bout with some of you,
And, perhaps, drive you and your course of sins
To their eternal kennels. I speak softly now;
'Tis manners in a noble woman's lodgings,
And I well know all my degrees of duty;
But, come I to your everlasting parting once,
Thunder shall seem soft music to that tempest.
BIAN. 'Twas said last week there would be change of weather,
When the moon hung so; and belike you heard it.
LEAN. Why, here's sin made, and ne'er a conscience put to't,
A monster with all forehead and no eyes!
Why do I talk to thee of sense or virtue,
That art as dark as death? and as much madness
To set light before thee as to lead blind folks
To see the monuments, which they may smell as soon
As they behold; marry, ofttimes their heads,
For want of light, may feel the hardness of 'em:
So shall thy blind pride my revenge and anger,
That canst not see it now; and it may fall
At such an hour when thou least seest of all:
So, to an ignorance darker than thy womb
I leave thy perjured soul; a plague will come! [*Exit.*
BIAN. Get you gone first, and then I fear no greater;
Nor thee will I fear long; I'll have this sauciness
Soon banished from these lodgings, and the rooms
Perfumed well after the corrupt air it leaves:

His breath has made me almost sick, in troth:

Enter the DUKE.

A poor, base start-up! life, because 'has got [220
Fair clothes by foul means, comes to rail and show 'em!
DUKE. Who's that?
BIAN. Cry you mercy, sir!
DUKE. Prithee, who's that?
BIAN. The former thing, my lord, to whom you gave
The captainship; he eats his meat with grudging still.
DUKE. Still? [230
BIAN. He comes vaunting here of his new love,
And the new clothes she gave him, Lady Livia;
Who but she now his mistress!
DUKE. Lady Livia?
Be sure of what you say.
BIAN. He showed me her name, sir,
In perfumed paper, her vows, her letter,
With an intent to spite me; so his heart said, [241
And his threats made it good; they were as spiteful
As ever malice uttered, and as dangerous,
Should his hand follow the copy.
DUKE. But that must not:
Do not you vex your mind; prithee, to bed, go;
All shall be well and quiet.
BIAN. I love peace, sir. [250
DUKE. And so do all that love; take you no care for't,
It shall be still provided to your hand.—
[*Exit* BIANCA.
[*Calling.*] Who's near us there?

Enter SERVANT.

SER. My lord?
DUKE. Seek out Hippolito,
Brother to Lady Livia, with all speed.
SER. He was the last man I saw, my lord. [261
DUKE. Make haste.—[*Exit* SERVANT.
He is a blood soon stirred; and, as he's quick
To apprehend a wrong, he's bold and sudden
In bringing forth a ruin: I know, likewise,
The reputation of his sister's honor's [269
As dear to him as life-blood to his heart;
Besides, I'll flatter him with a goodness to her—
Which I now thought on, but ne'er meant to practice,
Because I know her base—and that wind drives him:
The ulcerous reputation feels the poise
Of lightest wrongs, as sores are vexed with flies.
He comes.— [280

Enter HIPPOLITO.

Hippolito, welcome.
HIP. My loved lord!
DUKE. How does that lusty widow, thy kind sister?
Is she not sped yet of a second husband?
A bed-fellow she has; I ask not that;
I know she's sped of him.
HIP. Of him, my lord?
DUKE. Yes, of a bed-fellow: is the news so strange to you? [291
HIP. I hope 'tis so to all.
DUKE. I wish it were, sir,
But 'tis confessed too fast: her ignorant pleasures,
Only by lust instructed, have received
Into their services an impudent boaster,
One that does raise his glory from her shame,
And tells the mid-day sun what's done in darkness; [301
Yet, blinded with her appetite, wastes her wealth,
Buys her disgraces at a dearer rate
Than bounteous housekeepers purchase their honor.
Nothing sads me so much as that, in love
To thee and to thy blood, I had picked out [310
A worthy match for her, the great Vincentio,
High in our favor and in all men's thoughts.

HIP. O thou destruction of all happy fortunes,
Unsated blood! Know you the name, my lord,
Of her abuser? [319
DUKE. One Leantio.
HIP. He's a factor.
DUKE. He ne'er made so brave a voyage,
By his own talk.
HIP. The poor old widow's son.
I humbly take my leave.
DUKE. <I see 'tis done.>
Give her good counsel, make her see her error;
I know she'll hearken to you. [330
HIP. Yes, my lord,
I make no doubt, as I shall take the course
Which she shall never know till it be acted,
And, when she wakes to honor, then she'll thank me for't:
I'll imitate the pities of old surgeons
To this lost limb, who, ere they show their art, [340
Cast one asleep, then cut the diseased part;
So, out of love to her I pity most,
She shall not feel him going till he's lost;
Then she'll commend the cure. [*Exit.*
DUKE. The great cure's[4] past;
I count this done already; his wrath's sure,
And speaks an injury deep.—Farewell, Leantio; [350
This place will never hear thee murmur more.—

Enter the CARDINAL *and Servants, with lights.*

Our noble brother, welcome!
CAR. Set those lights down:
Depart till you be called. [*Exeunt Servants.* [358
DUKE. <There's serious business
Fixed in his look; nay, it inclines a little
To the dark color of a discontentment.>
Brother, what is't commands your eye so powerfully?
Speak, you seem lost.

[4] care is.

CAR. The thing I look on seems so,
To my eyes lost for ever.
DUKE. You look on me.
CAR. What a grief 'tis to a religious feeling
To think a man should have a friend [370 so goodly,
So wise, so noble, nay, a duke, a brother,
And all this certainly damned!
DUKE. How!
CAR. 'Tis no wonder,
If your great sin can do't: dare you look up
For thinking of a vengeance? dare you sleep [379
For fear of never waking but to death?
And dedicate unto a strumpet's love
The strength of your affections, zeal, and health?
Here you stand now; can you assure your pleasures
You shall once more enjoy her, but once more?
Alas, you cannot! what misery 'tis, then,
To be more certain of eternal death
Than of a next embrace! nay, shall [390 I show you
How more unfortunate you stand in sin
Than the low, private man: all his offences,
Like enclosed grounds, keep but about himself,
And seldom stretch beyond his own soul's bounds;
And when a man grows miserable, 'tis some comfort [400
When he's no further charged than with himself,
'Tis a sweet ease to wretchedness; but, great man,
Every sin thou committ'st shows like a flame
Upon a mountain; 'tis seen far about,
And, with a big wind made of popular breath,
The sparkles fly through cities, here one takes, [411
Another catches there, and in short time
Waste all to cinders; but remember still,
What burnt the valleys first came from the hill:

Every offence draws his particular pain;
But 'tis example proves the great man's bane.
The sins of mean men lie like scattered parcels [420
Of an unperfect bill; but, when such fall,
Then comes example, and that sums up all:
And this your reason grants; if men of good lives,
Who by their virtuous actions stir up others
To noble and religious imitation,
Receive the greater glory after death,
As sin must needs confess, what may they feel [431
In height of torments and in weight of vengeance,
Not only they themselves not doing well,
But sets a light up to show men to hell?

DUKE. If you have done, I have; no more, sweet brother!

CAR. I know time spent in goodness is too tedious;
This had not been a moment's space in lust now: [441
How dare you venture on eternal pain,
That cannot bear a minute's reprehension?
Methinks you should endure to hear that talked of
Which you so strive to suffer. O, my brother,
What were you, if that you were taken now! [450
My heart weeps blood to think on't; 'tis a work
Of infinite mercy, you can never merit,
That yet you are not death-struck, no, not yet;
I dare not stay you long, for fear you should not
Have time enough allowed you to repent in:
There's but this wall [*pointing to his* [460 *body*] betwixt you and destruction,
When you're at strongest, and but poor thin clay:
Think upon't, brother; can you come so near it
For a fair strumpet's love, and fall into
A torment that knows neither end nor bottom [469
For beauty but the deepness of a skin,
And that not of their own neither? Is she a thing
Whom sickness dare not visit, or age look on,
Or death resist? does the worm shun her grave?
If not, as your soul knows it, why should lust
Bring man to lasting pain for rotten dust? [480

DUKE. Brother of spotless honor, let me weep
The first of my repentance in thy bosom,
And show the blest fruits of a thankful spirit:
And if I e'er keep woman more, unlawfully,
May I want penitence at my greatest need!
And wise men know there is no barren place [491
Threatens more famine than a dearth in grace.

CAR. Why, here's a conversion is at this time, brother,
Sung for a hymn in Heaven, and at this instant
The powers of darkness groan, makes all hell sorry:
First I praise Heaven, then in my work I glory. [501
[*Calling.*] Who's there attends without?

Re-enter Servants.

1 SER. My lord?

CAR. Take up those lights; there was a thicker darkness
When they came first.—The peace of a fair soul
Keep with my noble brother!

DUKE. Joys be with you, sir! [*Exeunt* CARDINAL *and Servants.* [511
She lies alone to-night for't, and must still,
Though it be hard to conquer; but I've vowed
Never to know her as a strumpet more,

And I must save my oath: if fury fail not,
Her husband dies to-night, or, at the most,
Lives not to see the morning spent to-morrow;
Then will I make her lawfully mine own,
Without this sin and horror. Now I'm chidden,
For what I shall enjoy then unforbidden;
And I'll not freeze in stoves: 'tis but a while;
Live like a hopeful bridegroom, chaste from flesh,
And pleasure then will seem new, fair, and fresh. [*Exit.*

Scene II

The next morning Hippolito *has gone to* Livia's *house to find an opportunity to execute vengeance upon* Leantio.

Hip. The morning so far wasted, yet his baseness
So impudent! see if the very sun
Do not blush at him!
Dare he do thus much, and know me alive?
Put case one must be vicious, as I know myself
Monstrously guilty, there's a blind time made for't;
He might use only that: 'twere conscionable;
Art, silence, closeness, subtlety, and darkness,
Are fit for such a business; but there's no pity
To be bestowed on an apparent sinner,
An impudent daylight lecher. The great zeal
I bear to her advancement in this match
With Lord Vincentio, as the duke has wrought it,
To the perpetual honor of our house,
Puts fire into my blood to purge the air
Of this corruption, fear it spread too far,
And poison the whole hopes of this fair fortune.
I love her good so dearly that no brother
Shall venture farther for a sister's glory
Than I for her preferment.

Enter Leantio *and a* Page.

Lean. <Once again
I'll see that glistering whore, shines like a serpent
Now the court sun's upon her.> Page.
Page. Anon, sir.
Lean. <I'll go in state too.> See the coach be ready. [*Exit* Page.
I'll hurry away presently.
Hip. Yes, you shall hurry,
And the devil after you: take that at setting forth; [*Strikes him.*
Now, an you'll draw, we're upon equal terms, sir.
Thou took'st advantage of my name in honor
Upon my sister; I ne'er saw the stroke
Come, till I found my reputation bleeding;
And therefore count it I no sin to valor
To serve thy lust so: now we're of even hand,
Take your best course against me. You must die.
Lean. <How close sticks envy to man's happiness!
When I was poor, and little cared for life,
I had no such means offered me to die;
No man's wrath minded me.> Slave, I turn this to thee, [*Draws.*
To call thee to account for a wound lately
Of a base stamp upon me.
Hip. 'Twas most fit
For a base metal: come and fetch one now
More noble then, for I will use thee fairer
Than thou hast done thine own soul, or our honor; [*They fight.*
And there I think 'tis for thee. [Leantio *falls.*
Voices, *within.* Help, help! O, part 'em!
Lean. False wife, I feel now thou'st prayed heartily for me:
Rise, strumpet, by my fall; thy lust may reign now:
My heart-string and the marriage-knot that tied thee,
Breaks both together. [*Dies.*

HIP. There I heard the sound on't,
And never liked string better.

Enter GUARDIANO, LIVIA, ISABELLA, *the* WARD, *and* SORDIDO.

LIV. 'Tis my brother!
Are you hurt, sir? [90
HIP. Not anything.
LIV. Blest fortune!
Shift for thyself: what is he thou hast killed?
HIP. Our honor's enemy.
GUAR. Know you this man, lady?
LIV. Leantio, my love's joy!—Wounds stick upon thee
As deadly as thy sins! art thou not hurt— [100
The devil take that fortune!—and he dead!
Drop plagues into thy bowels without voice,
Secret and fearful!—Run for officers;
Let him be apprehended with all speed,
For fear he 'scape away; lay hands on him,
We cannot be too sure: 'tis wilful murder: [110
You do Heaven's vengeance and the law just service:
You know him not as I do; he's a villain
As monstrous as a prodigy and as dreadful.
HIP. Will you but entertain a noble patience
Till you but hear the reason, worthy sister? [120
LIV. The reason! that's a jest hell falls a-laughing at:
Is there a reason found for the destruction
Of our more lawful loves, and was there none
To kill the black lust 'twixt thy niece and thee,
That has kept close so long? [129
GUAR. How's that, good madam?
LIV. Too true, sir; there she stands, let her deny't:
The deed cries shortly in the midwife's arms,
Unless the parents' sins strike it stillborn;
And, if you be not deaf and ignorant,
You'll hear strange notes ere long.—Look upon me, wench;
'Twas I betrayed thy honor subtlely to him, [141
Under a false tale; it lights upon me now.—
His arm has paid me home upon thy breast,
My sweet, beloved Leantio!
GUAR. Was my judgment
And care in choice so devilishly abused,
So beyond shamefully? all the world will grin at me. [150
WARD. O Sordido, Sordido, I'm damned, I'm damned.
SOR. Damned? why, sir?
WARD. One of the wicked; dost not see't? a cuckold, a plain reprobate cuckold!
SOR. Nay, an you be damned for that, be of good cheer, sir, you've gallant company of all professions; I'll have a wife next Sunday too, because I'll along with you myself. [161
WARD. That will be some comfort yet.
LIV. You, sir, that bear your load of injuries,
As I of sorrows, lend me your grieved strength
To this sad burden [*pointing to the body of* LEANTIO], who in life wore actions,
Flames were not nimbler: we will talk of things [171
May have the luck to break our hearts together.
GUAR. I'll list to nothing but revenge and anger,
Whose counsels I will follow. [*Exeunt* LIVIA *and* GUARDIANO, *with the body of* LEANTIO.
SOR. A wife, quoth 'a?
Here's a sweet plum-tree of your guardianer's graffing! [181
WARD. Nay, there's a worse name belongs to this fruit yet, an you could hit on't, a more open one; for he that marries a whore looks like a fellow bound all

his lifetime to a medlar-tree, and that's good stuff; 'tis no sooner ripe but it looks rotten, and so do some queans at nineteen. A pox on't! I thought there was some knavery a-broach, for some- [190
thing stirred in her belly the first night I lay with her.

Sor. What, what, sir?

Ward. This is she brought up so courtly, can sing and dance!—and tumble too, methinks; I'll never marry wife again that has so many qualities.

Sor. Indeed, they are seldom good, master; for likely, when they are taught so many, they will have one trick more [200
of their own finding out.. Well, give me a wench but with one good quality, to lie with none but her husband, and that's bringing up enough for any woman breathing.

Ward. This was the fault when she was tendered to me; you never looked to this.

Sor. Alas, how would you have me see through a great farthingale, sir? I cannot peep through a mill-stone, or in the going, to see what's done i' the bottom. [211

Ward. Her father praised her breast; sh'ad the voice, forsooth! I marvelled she sung so small indeed, being no maid: now I perceive there's a young quirister in her belly; this breeds a singing in my head, I'm sure.

Sor. 'Tis but the tune of your wife's cinquapace, danced in a feather-bed: [219
faith, go lie down, master; but take heed your horns do not make holes in the pillow-beers.[5] <I would not batter brows with him for a hogshead of angels; [6] he would prick my skull as full of holes as a scrivener's sand-box.> [*Exeunt* Ward *and* Sordido.

Isa. <Was ever maid so cruelly beguiled,
To the confusion of life, soul, and honor,
All of one woman's murdering! I'd fain bring [231
Her name no nearer to my blood than woman,
And 'tis too much of that. O, shame and horror!
In that small distance from yon man to me
Lies sin enough to make a whole world perish.>
'Tis time we parted, sir, and left the [240
sight
Of one another; nothing can be worse
To hurt repentance, for our very eyes
Are far more poisonous to religiön
Than basilisks to them: if any goodness
Rest in you, hope of comforts, fear of judgments,
My request is, I ne'er may see you more;
And so I turn me from you everlastingly,
So is my hope to miss you: but, for her
That durst so dally with a sin so dangerous, [252
And lay a snare so spitefully for my youth,
If the least means but favor my revenge,
That I may practice the like cruel cunning
Upon her life as she has on mine honor,
I'll act it without pity.

Hip. Here's a care [260
Of reputation and a sister's fortune
Sweetly rewarded by her! would a silence,
As great as that which keeps among the graves,
Had everlastingly chained up her tongue!
My love to her has made mine miserable.

Re-enter Guardiano *and* Livia.

Guar. <If you can but dissemble your heart's griefs now, [270
Be but a woman so far.

Liv. Peace; I'll strive, sir.

Guar. As I can wear my injuries in a smile:
Here's an occasion offered, that gives anger
Both liberty and safety to perform
Things worth the fire it holds, without the fear [279
Of danger or of law; for mischiefs acted
Under the privilege of a marriage-triumph,
At the duke's hasty nuptials, will be thought

[5] pillow-cases. [6] gold coins.

Things merely accidental, all's[7] by chance,
Not got of their own natures.
LIV. I conceive you, sir,
Even to a longing for performance on't;
And here behold some fruits.> [*Kneels to* HIPPOLITO *and* ISABELLA.]
Forgive me both:
What I am now, returned to sense and judgment,
Is not the same rage and distractiön
Presented lately to you—that rude form
Is gone for ever; I am now myself,
That speaks all peace and friendship, and these tears
Are the true springs of hearty, penitent sorrow
For those foul wrongs which my forgetful fury
Slandered your virtues with: this gentleman
Is well resolved[8] now.
GUAR. I was never otherways;
I knew, alas, 'twas but your anger spake it;
And I ne'er thought on't more.
HIP., *raising* LIVIA. Pray, rise, good sister.
ISA. <Here's even as sweet amends made for a wrong now,
As one that gives a wound, and pays the surgeon;
All the smart's nothing, the great loss of blood,
Or the time of hindrance: well, I had a mother;
I can dissemble too.> What wrongs have slipped
Through anger's ignorance, aunt, my heart forgives.
GUAR. Why, that's[9] tuneful now!
HIP. And what I did, sister,
Was all for honor's cause, which time to come
Will approve to you.
LIV. Being awaked to goodness,
I understand so much, sir, and praise now
The fortune of your arm and of your safety;
For by his death you've rid me of a sin
As costly as e'er woman doted on:
'T has pleased the duke so well too, that, behold, sir, [*Giving paper.*
Has sent you here your pardon, which I kissed
With most affectionate comfort: when 'twas brought,
Then was my fit just past; it came so well, methought,
To glad my heart.
HIP. I see his grace thinks on me.
LIV. There's no talk now but of the preparation
For the great marriage.
HIP. Does he marry her, then?
LIV. With all speed, suddenly, as fast as cost
Can be laid on with many thousand hands.
This gentleman and I had once a purpose
To have honored the first marriage of the duke
With an invention of his own; 'twas ready,
The pains well past, most of the charge bestowed on't,
Then came the death of your good mother, niece,
And turned the glory of it all to black:
'Tis a device would fit these times so well, too,
Art's treasury not better: if you'll join,
It shall be done; the cost shall all be mine.
HIP. You've my voice first; 'twill well approve my thankfulness
For the duke's love and favor.
LIV. What say you, niece?
ISA. I am content to make one.
GUAR. The plot's full then;
Your pages, madam, will make shift for Cupids.
LIV. That will they, sir.
GUAR. You'll play your old part still.
LIV. What is it? good troth, I have even forgot it.
GUAR. Why, Juno Pronuba, the marriage goddess.
LIV. 'Tis right indeed.

[7] all as. [8] satisfied. [9] B, thus.

GUAR., *to* ISABELLA. And you shall play the Nymph
That offers sacrifice to appease her wrath.
ISA. Sacrifice, good sir? [389
LIV. Must I be appeased, then?
GUAR. That's as you list yourself, as you see cause.
LIV. Methinks 'twould show the more state in her deity
To be incensed.
ISA. 'Twould; but my sacrifice
Shall take a course to appease you; <or I'll fail in't,
And teach a sinful bawd to play a goddess.> [*Exit.* [400
GUAR. For our parts, we'll not be ambitious, sir:
Please you, walk in and see the project drawn,
Then take your choice.
HIP. I weigh not, so I have one.
[*Exeunt* GUARDIANO *and* HIPPOLITO.
LIV. How much ado have I to restrain fury
From breaking into curses! O, how painful 'tis [411
To keep great sorrow smothered! sure, I think
'Tis harder to dissemble grief than love.—
Leantio, here the weight of thy loss lies,
Which nothing but destruction can suffice.

SCENE III

The DUKE *is carrying out his intention to circumvent his brother. He is about to be married to* BIANCA, *and she, richly attired, is on her way to the Cathedral with him. They are attended by Lords, Cardinals, Ladies, and others, all in great state. As they are passing before the* DUKE'S *palace, to the music of hautboys, the procession is met by the* CARDINAL. [10

CAR. Cease, cease! religious honors done to sin
Disparage virtue's reverence, and will pull
Heaven's thunder upon Florence: holy ceremonies
Were made for sacred uses, not for sinful.
Are these the fruits of your repentance, brother?
Better it had been you had never sorrowed, [21
Than to abuse the benefit, and return
To worse than where sin left you.
Vowed you then never to keep strumpet more,
And are you now so swift in your desires
To knit your honors and your life fast to her? [29
Is not sin sure enough to wretched man,
But he must bind himself in chains to't! worse;
Must marriage, the immaculate robe of honor,
That renders virtue glorious, fair, and fruitful
To her great master, be now made the garment
Of leprosy and foulness? Is this penitence [40
To sanctify hot lust? what is it otherwise
Than worship done to devils? Is this the best
Amends that sin can make after her riots?
As if a drunkard, to appease Heaven's wrath,
Should offer up his surfeit for a sacrifice: [50
If that be comely, then lust's offerings are
On wedlock's sacred altar.
DUKE. Here you're bitter
Without cause, brother; what I vowed I keep,
As safe as you your conscience; and this needs not;
I taste more wrath in't than I do religion, [60
And envy more than goodness: the path now
I tread is honest, leads to lawful love,
Which virtue in her strictness would not check:
I vowed no more to keep a sensual woman;

'Tis done, I mean to make a lawful wife of her. [69
CAR. He that taught you that craft,
Call him not master long, he will undo you;
Grow not too cunning for your soul, good brother:
Is it enough to use adulterous thefts,
And then take sanctuary in marriäge?
I grant, so long as an offender keeps
Close in a privileged temple, his life's safe;
But, if he ever venture to come out, [80
And so be taken, then he surely dies for't:
So now you're safe; but, when you leave this body,
Man's only privileged temple upon earth,
In which the guilty soul takes sanctuary,
Then you'll perceive what wrongs chaste vows endure
When lust usurps the bed that should be pure. [91
BIAN. Sir, I have read you over all this while
In silence, and I find great knowledge in you
And severe learning; yet, 'mongst all your virtues
I see not charity written, which some call [99
The first-born of religion, and I wonder
I cannot see't in yours: believe it, sir,
There is no virtue can be sooner missed,
Or later welcomed; it begins the rest,
And sets 'em all in order: Heaven and angels
Take great delight in a converted sinner;
Why should you then, a servant and professor,
Differ so much from them? If every woman. [110
That commits evil should be therefore kept
Back in desires of goodness, how should virtue
Be known and honored? From a man that's blind
To take a burning taper 'tis no wrong,
He never misses it; but to take light
From one that sees, that's injury and spite. [120
Pray, whether is religion better served,
When lives that are licentious are made honest,
Than when they still run through a sinful blood?
'Tis nothing virtue's temples to deface;
But, build the ruins, there's a work of grace!
DUKE. I kiss thee for that spirit; thou'st praised thy wit [130
A modest way.—On, on, there! [*Hautboys. Exeunt all except the* CARDINAL.
CAR. Lust is bold,
And will have vengeance speak ere't be controlled. [*Exit.*

ACT FIVE

SCENE I

Preparations have been made for the masque in the hall of the palace, in celebration of the DUKE'S *marriage.* GUARDIANO *has plotted to make the* WARD *an instrument of vengeance, and has been endeavoring to arouse him to a sense of the dishonor done him. In connection with the masque which is to be given, an altar to Juno has been set up.*

GUAR. Speak, hast thou any sense of thy abuse? [11
Dost thou know what wrong's done thee?
WARD. I were an ass else;
I cannot wash my face but I am feeling on't.
GUAR., *giving weapon.* Here, take this caltrop[1] then; convey it secretly
Into the place I showed you: look you, sir,
This is the trap-door to't. [20
WARD. I know't of old, uncle, since the last triumph; here rose up a devil with one eye, I remember, with a company of fireworks at's tail.
GUAR. Prithee, leave squibbing now; mark me, and fail not;
But, when thou hear'st me give a stamp, down with't;

[1] a four-spiked weapon for the hindrance of cavalry.

The villain's caught then. [29

WARD. If I miss you, hang me: I love to catch a villain, and your stamp shall go current, I warrant you. But how shall I rise up and let him down too all at one hole? that will be a horrible puzzle. You know I have a part in't; I play Slander.

GUAR. True, but never make you ready for't.

WARD. No? my clothes are bought and all, and a foul fiend's head, with a long, contumelious tongue i' the chaps on't, a very fit shape for Slander i' th' out- [41
parishes.

GUAR. It shall not come so far; thou understand'st it not.

WARD. O, O!

GUAR. He shall lie deep enough ere that time,
And stick first upon those.

WARD. Now I conceive you, guardianer.

GUAR. Away! [50
List to the privy stamp, that's all thy part.

WARD. Stamp my horns in a mortar, if I miss you, and give the powder in white wine to sick cuckolds, a very present remedy for the headache. [*Exit.*

GUAR. If this should any way miscarry now—
As, if the fool be nimble enough, 'tis certain— [60
The pages, that present the swift-winged Cupids,
Are taught to hit him with their shafts of love,
Fitting his part, which I have cunningly poisoned:
He cannot scape my fury; and those ills
Will be laid all on fortune, not our wills;
That's all the sport on't: for who will imagine [70
That, at the celebration of this night,
Any mischance that haps can flow from spite? [*Exit.*

There is a flourish of trumpets, and in the gallery above the hall the DUKE, BIANCA, *the* DUKE'S *brother, and other* CARDINALS, FABRICIO, *Lords, and Ladies, etc., enter and take their places.*

DUKE. Now, our fair duchess, your delight shall witness [80
How you're beloved and honored; all the glories
Bestowed upon the gladness of this night
Are done for your bright sake.

BIAN. I am the more
In debt, my lord, to love and courtesies
That offer up themselves so bounteously
To do me honored grace, without my merit.

DUKE. A goodness set in greatness; how it sparkles [91
Afar off, like pure diamonds set in gold!
How perfect my desires were, might I witness
But a fair noble peace 'twixt your two spirits!
The reconcilement would be more sweet to me
Than longer life to him that fears to die.— [100
Good sir—

CAR. I profess peace, and am content.

DUKE. I'll see the seal upon't, and then 'tis firm.

CAR. You shall have all you wish.
[*Kisses* BIANCA.

DUKE. I've all indeed now.

BIAN. <But I've made surer work; this shall not blind me;
He that begins so early to reprove, [110
Quickly rid him, or look for little love:
Beware a brother's envy; he's next heir too.
Cardinal, you die this night; the plot's laid surely;
In time of sports death may steal in securely;
Then 'tis least thought on;
For he that's most religious, holy friend,
Does not at all hours think upon his end;
He has his times of frailty, and his [121
thoughts
Their transportations too through flesh and blood,
For all his zeal, his learning, and his light,
As well as we, poor soul[s], that sin by night.>

DUKE, *looking at a paper.* What's this, Fabricio? [129

FAB. Marry, my lord, the model
Of what's presented.
DUKE. O, we thank their loves.—
Sweet duchess, take your seat; list to the argument. [*Reads.*
"There is a Nymph that haunts the woods and springs,
In love with two at once, and they with her;
Equal it runs; but, to decide these things,
The cause to mighty Juno they refer,
She being the marriage-goddess: the [141 two lovers,
They offer sighs, the Nymph a sacrifice,
All to please Juno, who by signs discovers
How the event shall be; so that strife dies:
Then springs a second; for the man refused [150
Grows discontent, and, out of love abused,
He raises Slander up, like a black fiend,
To disgrace th' other, which pays him i' th' end."
BIAN. In troth, my lord, a pretty, pleasing argument,
And fits th' occasion well: envy and slander
Are things soon raised against two faithful lovers; [160
But comfort is, they're not long unrewarded. [*Music.*
DUKE. This music shows they're upon entrance now.
BIAN. <Then enter all my wishes!>

HYMEN *in a yellow robe,* GANYMEDE *in a blue robe, powdered with stars, and* HEBE *in a white robe with golden stars enter below. Each of them carries a covered cup; they dance a short dance,* [170 *and then make obeisance to the* DUKE, BIANCA, *and the* LORD CARDINAL.

HYM. *To thee, fair bride, Hymen offers up*
Of nuptial joys this the celestial cup;
Taste it, and thou shalt ever find
Love in thy bed, peace in thy mind.

BIAN. We'll taste you, sure; 'twere pity to disgrace
So pretty a beginning. [*Takes cup from* HYMEN, *and drinks.* [181

DUKE. 'Twas spoke nobly.
GAN. *Two cups of nectar have we begged from Jove;*
Hebe, give that to innocence, I this to love:
Take heed of stumbling more, look to your way;
Remember still the Via Lactea. [GANYMEDE and HEBE respectively offer their cups to the DUKE and CARDINAL, who drink. [192
HEBE. *Well, Ganymede, you've more faults, though not so known;*
I spilled one cup, but you've filched many a one.
HYM. *No more; forbear, for Hymen's sake;*
In love we met, and so let's part.[2]
[Exeunt HYMEN, GANYMEDE, and HEBE.
DUKE. But, soft; here's no such persons in the argument [202
As these three, Hymen, Hebe, Ganymede;
The actors that this model here discovers
Are only four—Juno, a Nymph, two lovers.
BIAN. This is some antemasque belike, my lord, [210
To entertain time. <Now my peace is perfect,
Let sports come on apace.> Now is their time, my lord: [*Music.*
Hark you! you hear from 'em.
DUKE. The Nymph indeed!

Two Nymphs enter below, bearing lighted tapers. Then ISABELLA *comes in dressed as a Nymph, with flowers and garlands, carrying a censer with fire* [220 *in it. They set the censer and tapers on the altar with much reverence, singing this ditty in parts:*

Juno, nuptial goddess,
Thou that rul'st o'er coupled bodies,
Tiest man to woman, never to forsake her,

[2] These two lines are probably corrupt: they should perhaps rhyme.

Thou only powerful marriage-maker,
Pity this amazed affection!
I love both, and both love me; [230
Nor know I where to give rejection,
My heart likes so equally,
Till thou sett'st right my peace of life,
And with thy power conclude this strife.
ISA. *Now, with my thanks, depart you to the springs,*
I to these wells of love. [Exeunt the two Nymphs.] *Thou sacred goddess*
And queen of nuptials, daughter to great Saturn, [240
Sister and wife to Jove, imperial Juno,
Pity this passionate conflict in my breast,
This tedious war 'twixt two affectiöns;
Crown me with victory, and my heart's at peace!

Enter HIPPOLITO and GUARDIANO as Shepherds.

HIP. *Make me that happy man, thou mighty goddess!*
GUAR. *But I live most in hope, if truest love* [251
Merit the greatest comfort.
ISA. *I love both*
With such an even and fair affectiön,
I know not which to speak for, which to wish for,
Till thou, great arbitress 'twixt lovers' hearts,
By thy auspicious grace design the man;
Which pity I implore! [260
HIP. AND GUAR. *We all implore it!*
ISA. *And after sighs—contrition's truest odors—*
I offer to thy powerful deity
This precious incense [waving the censer]; *may it ascend peacefully!*
<And if it keep true touch, my good aunt Juno,
'Twill try your immortality ere't be long:
I fear you'll ne'er get so nigh Heaven again, [271
When you're once down.> [LIVIA *descends as* JUNO, *attended by Pages as Cupids.*
LIV. *Though you and your affections*
Seem all as dark to our illustrious brightness
As night's inheritance, hell, we pity you,
And your requests are granted. You ask signs; [280
They shall be given you; we'll be gracious to you:
He of those twain which we determine for you,
Love's arrows shall wound twice; the latter wound
Betokens love in age; for so are all
Whose love continues firmly all their lifetime
Twice wounded at their marriage, else affection [291
Dies when youth ends.—
<This savor overcomes me!>
Now, for a sign of wealth and golden days,
Bright-eyed prosperity—which all couples love,
Ay, and makes love—take that; our brother Jove [299
Never denies us of his burning treasure
To express bounty. [ISABELLA falls down and dies.
DUKE. She falls down upon't;
What's the conceit of that?
FAB. As o'erjoyed belike:
Too much prosperity o'erjoys us all,
And she has her lapful, it seems, my lord.
DUKE. This swerves a little from the argument though:
Look you, my lords. [*Showing paper.* [310
GUAR. <All's fast: now comes my part to tole[2] him hither;
Then, with a stamp given, he's despatched as cunningly.>
HIP., *raising the body of* ISABELLA. Stark dead! O treachery! cruelly made away! [GUARDIANO *stamps, and falls through a trap-door.*
How's that? [319
FAB. Look, there's one of the lovers dropped away too!
DUKE. Why, sure, this plot's drawn false; here's no such thing.
LIV. O, I am sick to the death! let me down quickly,
This fume is deadly; O, 't has poisoned me!

[2] draw.

My subtlety is sped, her art has quitted me;
My own ambition pulls me down to ruin.
[*Falls down and dies.*
HIP. Nay, then, I kiss thy cold lips, and applaud
This thy revenge in death. [*Kisses the body of* ISABELLA.
FAB. Look, Juno's down too!
[*Cupids shoot at* HIPPOLITO.
What makes she there? her pride should keep aloft:
She was wont to scorn the earth in other shows;
Methinks her peacock's feathers are much pulled.
HIP. O, death runs through my blood in a wild flame too!
Plague of those Cupids! some lay hold on 'em,
Let 'em not scape; they've spoiled me; the shaft's deadly.
DUKE. I've lost myself in this quite.
HIP. My great lords,
We're all confounded.
DUKE. How?
HIP. Dead; and I worse.
FAB. Dead! my girl dead? I hope
My sister Juno has not served me so.
HIP. Lust and forgetfulness has been amongst us;
And we are brought to nothing: some blest charity
Lend me the speeding pity of his sword,
To quench this fire in blood! Leantio's death
Has brought all this upon us—now I taste it—
And made us lay plots to confound each other;
Th' event so proves it; and man's understanding
Is riper at his fall than all his lifetime.
She, in a madness for her lover's death,
Revealed a fearful lust in our near bloods,
For which I'm punished dreadfully and unlooked for;
Proved her own ruin too; vengeance met vengeance,
Like a set match, as if the plagues of sin
Had been agreed to meet here altogether;
But how her fawning partner fell I reach not,
Unless caught by some springe of his own setting,
For, on my pain, he never dreamed of dying;
The plot was all his own, and he had cunning
Enough to save himself; but 'tis the property
Of guilty deeds to draw your wise men downward:
Therefore the wonder ceases. O, this torment!
DUKE. Our guard below there!
Enter a LORD *with a Guard.*
LORD. My lord?
HIP. Run and meet death, then,
And cut off time and pain! [*Runs on a sword and dies.*
LORD. Behold, my lord,
Has run his breast upon a weapon's point!
DUKE. Upon the first night of our nuptial honors
Destruction play her triumph, and great mischiefs
Mask in expected pleasures! 'tis prodigious!
They're things most fearfully ominous; I like 'em not.—
Remove these ruined bodies from our eyes. [*The Guard removes the bodies of* ISABELLA, LIVIA, *and* HIPPOLITO.
BIAN., *glancing at the* CARDINAL. <Not yet, no change? when falls he to the earth?>
LORD. Please but your excellence to peruse that paper, [*Gives paper to the* DUKE.
Which is a brief confession from the heart
Of him that fell first, ere his soul departed;
And there the darkness of these deeds speaks plainly;
'Tis the full scope, the manner, and intent:
His ward, that ignorantly let him down,
Fear put to present flight at the voice of him.

BIAN. <Not yet?>
DUKE. Read, read, for I am lost in sight and strength! [*Falls.*
CAR. My noble brother!
BIAN. O, the curse of wretchedness!
My deadly hand is fall'n upon my lord:
Destruction, take me to thee! give me way;
The pains and plagues of a lost soul upon him
That hinders me a moment!
DUKE. My heart swells bigger yet; help here, break't ope!
My breast flies open next. [*Dies.*
BIAN. O, with the poison
That was prepared for thee! thee, cardinal,
'Twas meant for thee!
CAR. Poor prince!
BIAN. Accursëd error!
Give me thy last breath, thou infected bosom!
And wrap two spirits in one poisoned vapor!
Thus, thus, reward thy murderer, and turn death [*Kisses the body of the* DUKE.
Into a parting kiss! my soul stands ready at my lips,
Even vexed to stay one minute after thee.
CAR. The greatest sorrow and astonishment
That ever struck the general peace of Florence
Dwells in this hour.
BIAN. So, my desires are satisfied;
I feel death's power within me.
Thou hast prevailed in something, cursëd poison,
Though thy chief force was spent in my lord's bosom;
But my deformity in spirit's more foul;
A blemished face best fits a leprous soul.
What make I here? these are all strangers to me,
Not known but by their malice, now thou'rt gone,
Nor do I seek their pities. [*Drinks from the poisoned cup.*
CAR. O restrain
Her ignorant, wilful hand!
BIAN. Now do; 'tis done.—
Leantio, now I feel the breach of marriage
At my heart-breaking.—O, the deadly snares
That women set for women, without pity
Either to soul or honor! learn by me
To know your foes: in this belief I die:
Like our own sex we have no enemy.
LORD. See, my lord,
What shift sh'as made to be her own destruction!
BIAN. Pride, greatness, honor, beauty, youth, ambition,
You must all down together; there's no help for't:
Yet this my gladness is, that I remove,
Tasting the same death in a cup of love. [*Dies.*
CAR. Sin, what thou art these ruins show too piteously;
Two kings on one throne cannot sit together,
But one must needs down, for his title's wrong;
So where lust reigns, that prince cannot reign long.

THE TRAITOR

BY

JAMES SHIRLEY

INTRODUCTION

It is not for its portrayal of character that Shirley's "Traitor" is to be reckoned among great Elizabethan dramas, for there is not one of its people whose humanity stamps itself upon our consciousness as do the notable figures of Shakespeare and Webster and Middleton; it is not for its versification, for the verse is of the usual Shirley order; it is not for imaginative power, for there is little or none; it is not for the beauty of the language, which does not always escape the absurd, especially when it aims high; it is not for poetic feeling, which is generally commonplace. If it is to be ranked as one of the best of our tragedies, it is by reason of its magnificent dramatic quality. We have a succession of splendidly managed scenes in which our interest is held from start to finish, because we cannot foresee the outcome. The element of surprise which Beaumont and Fletcher had introduced is here seen almost in perfection—never, as was too often the case with the originators, at the expense of dramatic truth. We see Lorenzo betrayed more than once; but he gets out of his awkward predicaments not only with remarkable cleverness and coolness, but in a way that the reader feels he can accept as not putting too great a strain upon his credulity. It is one of the half-dozen cleverest plays of the entire period. The last two acts, however, are scarcely up to the level of the first three; and V 1 borders on the ridiculous; but the greatest fault of the play is the absurdity of having a lover resign his mistress to a friend against her will, especially when the friend is betrothed to another woman.

"The Traitor" was licensed by the Master of the Revels May 4, 1631, was entered for publication in November, 1634, and issued from the press in 1635. Not only was it attributed to Shirley on the title-page, but also there was a dedication by him, and commendatory verses confirm his authorship. Nevertheless, some sixty years later attempts were made to deprive Shirley of the credit of it. Langbaine, followed by Gildon, says, "This play was one Mr. Rivers's, a Jesuit, although altered a little and introduced into the House by Shirley." A more specific statement was made by the playwright Peter Motteux on the occasion of its revival in 1692: "Shirley only ushered it in to the stage: the author of it was one Mr. Rivers, a Jesuit, who wrote it in his confinement at Newgate, where he died." There was no doubt the

one source for these two statements, made almost contemporaneously. It is, of course, not improbable that Shirley may have obtained his plot from the Jesuit named; but, as for the latter having written the play, all that is to be said is that, if so, his style bore a quite extraordinary resemblance to that of Shirley. There is, in fact, no sign of the presence of any other hand than that of Shirley, and his is obvious.

The story has an historical basis; but the author has treated his facts with the greatest freedom. The real Lorenzo (Lorenzino de' Medici) survived the assassination of the Duke Alessandro some eleven years.

CHARACTERS

ALEXANDER, *Duke of Florence.*
LORENZO, *his Kinsman and Favorite.*
SCIARRHA.
PISANO, *Lover to Oriana.*
COSMO, *his Friend.*
FLORIO, *Sciarrha's Brother.*
DEPAZZI, *a Creature of Lorenzo's.*
ALONZO, FREDERICO } *Noblemen.*

PETRUCHIO,[1] *Pisano's Servant.*
ROGERO, *Page to Depazzi.*
AMIDEA, *Sciarrha's Sister.*
ORIANA.
MOROSA, *her Mother.*
Gentlemen, Servants, Masquers.

[1] The Italian form of the name is Petruccio. The spelling adopted by Shirley, as by Shakespeare in "The Taming of the Shrew," is to indicate the pronunciation.

PLACE: *Florence.*
TIME: 1537.

ACT ONE

Scene I

Lorenzo, *who is conspiring to dethrone the* Duke, *has plotted also to divert the love of* Pisano *from* Amidea *to* Oriana, *the beloved of his friend* Cosmo, *a kinsman of the reigning* Duke, *his agent being* Petruchio.

Pisano *has asked* Cosmo *to come to his house, intending to reveal to him the change in his feelings; and, now that the interview is near at hand, he fears it and would like to evade it. He has* Petruchio *with him.*

Pis. Didst bid him come?
Pet. I did.
Pis. Go back again,
And tell him I am gone abroad.
Pet. He's here
Already, sir.

Enter Cosmo.

Pis. Oh, Cosmo!
Cos. Dear Pisano,
That I could let thee nearer into me!
My heart counts this embrace a distance yet;
Let us incorporate.
Pis. I was wooing, Cosmo,
My man, to tell thee I was gone abroad,
Before thou cam'st.
Cos. How's this? your words and looks
Are strange, and teach me to infer I am
Not welcome; that, on riper counsel, you
Do wish my absence.
Pis. What, for telling truth?
He thus should have but made thee fit to see
Thy friend; thou com'st with expectatiön
To hear me talk sense, dost not?
Cos. Yes.
Pis. La, now!
And to discourse as I was wont, of state,
Our friendship, or of women?. no such matter.
Cos. This is more wild than usual; your language
Is not so clear as it was wont; it carries
Not the same even thread; although some words
May knit, the sense is scattered.
Pis. Right, right, Cosmo.
The reason is, I have straggled,
And lost myself, I know not where, in what
Part of the world. And would not this have shown
As well in him [*pointing to* Petruchio] to have prepared thee now?
Cos. What humor's this, Pisano? I am yet
To understand.
Pis. To understand? why, Cosmo,
Had I not changed my dialect and method,
What need this tedious apology?
That's it I would have had thee know before.
Thou canst not understand me, yet thou hast
A name in Florence, for a ripe young man,
Of nimble apprehension, of a wise
And spreading observatiön, of whom
Already our old men do prophesy
Good and great things worthy thy fair dimensions!
Cos. This is an argument above the rest
Pisano is not well; for, being temperate,
He was not wont to flatter and abuse
His friend.
Pis. Beside, there is another reason,

Thou shouldst discover me at heart, through all
These mists; thou art in love, too, and who cannot,
That feels himself the heat, but shrewdly guess
At every symptom of that wanton fever?—
Oh, Cosmo! [90
Cos. What misfortune can approach
Your happy love in fairest Amidea?
You have been long contracted, and have passed
The tedious hope; Hymen doth only wait
An opportunity to light his torch,
Which will burn glorious at your nuptiäls.
Let jealous lovers fear, and feel what 'tis
To languish, talk away their blood and strength, [101
Question their unkind stars; you have your game
Before you, sir.
Pis. Before me? Where? why dost
Thou mock me, Cosmo? she's not here.
Cos. It is
No pilgrimage to travel to her lip.
Pis. 'Tis not for you. [109
Cos. How, sir; for me? you've no
Suspiciön I can be guilty of
A treason to our friendship. Be so just,
If malice have been busy with my fame,
To let me know—
Pis. You hastily interpret.
Thy pardon; I have only erred, but not
With the least scruple of thy faith and honor
To me. Thou hast a noble soul, and lov'st me [120
Rather too well; I would thou wert my enemy,
That we had been born in distant climes, and never
Took cement from our sympathies in nature.
Would we had never seen or known each other!
This may seem strange from him that loves thee, Cosmo, [130
More precious than his life.
Cos. Love me, and wish
This separation?
Pis. I will give thee proof;
So well I love thee, nothing in the world
Thy soul doth heartily affect, but I
Do love it too: does it not trouble thy
Belief? I wear not my own heart about me,
But thine exchanged; thy eyes let in my objects; [141
Thou hear'st for me, talk'st, kissest, and enjoy'st
All my felicities.
Cos. What means this language?
Pis. But what's all this to thee? Go to Oriana,
And bathe thy lips in rosy dew of kisses;
Renew thy eye, that looks as Saturn hung
Upon the lid; take in some golden beam,
She'll dart a thousand at one glance; and, if, [152
At thy return, thou find'st I have a being
In this vain world, I'll tell thee more.
[*Exit.*
Cos., *to* Petruchio. But, sir, *you* must not part so.
Pet. Not with my good will;
I have no great ambition to be mad.
Cos. Petruchio, let me conjúre thee, tell
What weight hangs on thy master's [161 heart? why does he
Appear so full of trouble?
Pet. Do you not guess?
Cos. Point at the cause; I cannot.
Pet. Why, he loves—
Cos. The beauteous Amidea, I know that.
Pet. Some such thing was; but you are his friend, my lord: [170
His soul is now devoted to Oriana,
And he will die for her, if this ague hold him.
Cos. Ha!
Pet. Your doublet pinch you, sir? I cannot tell;
But ne'er a woman in the world should make
Me hang myself. It may be, for his honor, [180
He'll choose another death; he is about one;

For 'tis not possible, without some cure,
He should live long; he has forgot to sleep;
And, for his diet, he has not eaten this se'nnight
As much as would choke a sparrow; a fly is [189
An epicure to him. Good sir, do you counsel him.— [*Exit* Cosmo.
So, so! it works. This was my Lord Lorenzo's
Plot, and I have been his engine in the work,
To batter his love to Amidea, by praising
Oriana to him. He is here.—

Enter Lorenzo, *attended.*

My lord.—

Lor. Petruchio, where's your lord? how moves the work? [201

Pet. To your own wish, my lord; he has thrown off
The thought of Amidea, and is mad
For Cosmo's mistress, whom, by your instructions,
I have commended so.

Lor. My witty villain!

Pet. Cosmo is with him, to whom cunningly [210
I have discovered his disease; and I
Beseech you interrupt them not.

Lor. This may
Have tragical effects, Petruchio:
For Cosmo, we shall prune his fortune thus.
Oriana's wealth would swell him in the state;
He grows too fast already.—Be still ours.

Pet. My lord, you bought my life, when you procured [221
My pardon from the duke. [*Exit* Lorenzo *with his Attendants.*

Re-enter Pisano *and* Cosmo.

Pis. O, friend, thou canst not be so merciful,
To give away such happiness: my love
Is, for some sin I have committed, thus
Transplanted. I looked rather thou shouldst kill me [230
Than give away this comfort; 'tis a charity
Will make thee poor; and 'twere a great deal better
That I should languish still, and die.

Cos. While I have art to help thee? Oriana
And I were but in treaty; howsoever,
I were not worthy to be called his friend
Whom I preferred not to a mistress. If
You can find dispensatiön to quit [241
With Amidea, your first love, be confident
Oriana may be won; and it were necessary
You did prepare the mother; be not modest.

Pis. Each syllable is a blessing.—Hark, Petruchio. [*Whispers to him.*

Cos. <There is an engine levelled at my fate, [250
And I must arm.>

Pis. Away! [*Exit* Petruchio.

Cos. This for thy comfort;
Although some compliments have passed between
Me and Oriana, I am not warm
Yet in the mother's fancy, whose power may
Assist you much; but lose no time: let's follow. [260

Pis. Thou miracle of friendship!
[*Exeunt.*

Scene II

In a room in the Duke's *palace, the* Duke, *attended by* Florio *and* Frederico, *is receiving* Alonzo, *who has just handed to him letters from an exile, revealing the treachery of* Lorenzo.

Duke. Letters to us? from whom?

Alon. Castruchio.[2]

Duke. The exile? whence?

Alon. Siena, my good lord; [9
It came enclosed within my letter, which
Imposed my care and duty in the swift
Delivery. [*The* Duke *reads.*

Fred. <The duke is pale o' the sudden.>

Duke. <A palsy does possess me; ha! Lorenzo?

[2] The name is properly Castruccio; but Shirley spells it in this way to indicate the pronunciation, as in the case of Petruccio.

Our cousin the enemy of our life and state!
My bosom kinsman! Not too loud; the traitor
May hear, and by escape prevent[3] our justice.>
FLO. <What traitor?>
DUKE. Signior Alonzo, come you hither.
What correspondence maintain you with this
Castruchio?
ALON. None, my lord! but I am happy
In his electiön, to bring the first
Voice to your safety.
DUKE. Most ingrateful man!
Turn rebel! I have worn him in my blood.
ALON. 'Tis time to purge the humor.
DUKE. I will do it.—
Our guard!—Were he more precious, had he shared
Our soul, as he but borrows of our flesh,
This action makes him nothing; had I been
In heaven, I could have lent him my eternity.
He turn conspirator? oh, the fate of princes!
But stay, this paper speaks of no particular;
He does not mention what design, what plot.
ALON. More providence is necessary.
DUKE. Right,
Right, good Alonzo; thou'rt an honest man,
And lov'st us well. What's to be done?
ALON. 'Tis best
To make his person sure; by this you may
Discover soonest who are of his faction.
DUKE. And at our leisure study of his punishment,
Which must exceed death; every common trespass
Is so rewarded: first, apply all tortures
To enforce confession who are his confederates
And how they meant to murder us; then some rare
Inventiön to execute the traitor,
So as he may be half a year in dying,
Will make us famed for justice.

Enter LORENZO *and* DEPAZZI.

ALON. He is here;
Shall we apprehend him?
LOR. Happy morning to
My gracious sovereign!
DUKE. Good morrow, coz.
<Can treason couch itself within that frame?>
We have letters for you. [*Gives* LORENZO *the letters.*
LOR. Letters! these, dread sir,
Have no directiön to me; your highness
Is only named.
DUKE. They will concern your reading.
<Alonzo, now observe and watch him.> Florio,
Depazzi, come you hither. <Does Lorenzo
Look like a traitor?
DEP. How, sir? a traitor?>
DUKE. Ay, sir.
DEP. I, sir? by my honor, not I, sir; I defy him that speaks it. <I am in a fine pickle.>
LOR. I have read.
DUKE. Not blush? not tremble? read again.
LOR. The substance is, that you maintain
A vigilant eye over Lorenzo, who
Hath threatened, with your death, his country's liberty
And other things touching reducing[4] of
A commonwealth.
DUKE. I like not that.
DEP. <All's out!
A pox upon him for a traitor, he
Has hedged me in; but I'll confess.>
DUKE. What answer
Make you to this, Lorenzo?
LOR. This, o' the sudden,
Sir: I must owe the title of a traitor

[3] anticipate.

[4] the re-creation.

To your high favors: envy first conspired,
And malice now accuses; but what story
Mentioned his name that had his prince's bosom
Without the people's hate? 'tis sin enough, [121
In some men, to be great; the throng of stars,
The rout and common people of the sky,
Move still another way than the sun does,
That gilds the creature. Take your honors back,
And, if you can, that purple of my veins,
Which flows in yours, and you shall leave me in [130
A state I shall not fear the great ones' envy
Nor common people's rage; and yet, perhaps,
You may be credulous against me.

DUKE. Ha!

ALON. <The duke is cool.>

DUKE. Alonzo, look you prove Lorenzo what you say.

ALON. I say, my lord? [140
I have discovered all my knowledge, sir.

DEP. Stand to't.

LOR. With license of your highness, what
Can you imagine I should gain by treason?
Admit I should be impious, as to kill you:
I am your nearest kinsman, and should forfeit [150
Both name and future title to the state
By such a hasty, bloody disposition;
The rabble hate me now; how shall I then
Expect a safety? Is it reformation
Of Florence they accuse me of? suggesting
I disaffect a monarchy, which how
Vain and ridiculous would appear in me
Your wisdom judge; in you I live and flourish. [161
What, in your death, can I expect to equal
The riches I enjoy under your warmth?
Should I, for the air and talk of a new government,
A commonwealth, lose all my certainties?
And you above them all, whose favors have
Fallen like the dew upon me? have I a soul [171
To think the guilt of such a murder easy,
Were there no other torments? or can I
Expect the people will reward your murderer
With anything but death? a parricide!

ALON. <So, so, the duke's already in his circle.>

LOR. But I am tame, as if I had no sense, [180
No other argument to vindicate
My loyalty, thus poisoned by a paper,
In my eternal fame, and by a slave?
Call to my brow some one that dare accuse me;
Let him have honor great as mine to forfeit;
Or, since your grace hath taken me so near
Your own height that my scale may not expect [191
Such a proportioned adversary, yet let him
Have name within his country, and allow him
A soul 'gainst which I may engage my more
Than equal honor; then I'll praise your justice;
But let him not be one condemned already, [201
A desperate exile. Is it possible
A treason hatched in Florence 'gainst the duke
Should have no eyes at home to penetrate
The growing danger, but at Siena one
Must with a perspective discover all?
Ask this good counsellor, or these gentlemen,
Whose faiths are tried, whose cares are always waking [211
About your person, how have I appeared
To them, that thus I should be rendered hateful

To you and my good country? they are virtuous,
And dare not blemish a white faith, accuse
My sound heart of dishonor. Sir, [220
you must
Pardon my bold defence; my virtue bleeds
By your much easiness, and I am compelled
To break all modest limits, and to waken
Your memory (if it be not too late
To say you have one) with the story of
My fair deservings. Who, sir, overthrew
With his designs your late ambitious brother, [231
Hippolito, who, like a meteor, threatened
A black and fatal omen?
DUKE. 'Twas Lorenzo.
LOR. Be yet as just, and say whose art directed
A countermine to check the pregnant hopes
Of Salviati, who, for his cardinal's cap,
In Rome was potent and here popular?
DUKE. None but Lorenzo. [241
DEP. <Admirable traitor!>
LOR. Whose service was commended when the exiles,
One of whose tribe accuseth me, had raised
Commotions in our Florence? When the hinge
Of state did faint under the burthen and
The people sweat with their own [250
fears to think
The soldier should inhabit their calm dwellings,
Who then rose up your safety and crushed all
Their plots to air?
DUKE. Our cousin, dear Lorenzo.
LOR. When he that should reward forgets the men
That purchased his security, 'tis virtue
To boast a merit. With my services [261
I have not starved your treasury; the grand
Captain Gonzales accounted to King Ferdinand
Three hundred thousand crowns for spies; what bills
Have I brought in for such intelligence?
DEP. <I do grow hearty.>
DUKE. All thy actiöns [270
Stand fresh before us, and confirm thou art
Our best and dearest friend; thus we assure
Our confidence; they love us not that feed
One jealous thought of our dear coz, Lorenzo, [278
New welcome to us all.—For you, Alonzo,
Give o'er your paper kites, learn wit, 'tis time.—[*Walks aside with* LORENZO.
<Where shall we meet to-night?
LOR. Pardon me, sir;
I am a dangerous man.
DUKE. No more of that;
I'll credit my soul with thee. Shall we revel
This night with Amidea?>
DEP. <The duke courts him. [289
Well, go thy ways, for one of the most excellent,
Impudent traitors.>
DUKE, *catching the last word.* Yet a murmuring
Of traitor? we shall soon[er] suspect him
That thinks Lorenzo guilty.
DEP. I, my lord,
Dare boldly swear, his honor is as free
From any treason as myself.
<I did prophesy this issue.> [300
DUKE. <'Tis an age
Till night; I long to fold her in my arms.
Prepare Sciarrha; but be very wise
In the discovery; he is all touchwood.
LOR. I know he is her brother; leave the managing
Of things to me.
DUKE. Still, when we expect
Our bliss, time creeps; but, when the happier things [310
Call to enjoy, each saucy hour hath wings.>

ACT TWO

Scene I

Lorenzo *is visiting* Sciarrha *in the latter's house, not to induce him to consent to the gratifying of the* Duke's *lust, as he had promised, but, instead, to prepare* Sciarrha *to resist the dishonor to his family.*

Sci. My sister! Though he be the duke, he dares not.—
Patience, patience! if there be such a virtue,
I want it, Heaven; yet keep it a little longer;
It were a sin to have it; such an injury
Deserves a wrath next to your own.—My sister!
It has thrown wild-fire in my brain, Lorenzo,
A thousand Furies revel in my skull.
Has he not sins enough in's court to damn him,
But my roof must be guilty of new lusts,
And none but Amidea? these the honors
His presence brings our house?
Lor. Temper your rage.
Sci. Are all the brothels rifled? no quaint piece
Left him in Florence, that will meet his hot
And valiant luxury, that we are come to
Supply his blood out of our families?
Diseases gnaw his title off!
Lor. My lord—
Sci. He is no prince of mine; he forfeited
His greatness that black minute he first gave
Consent to my dishonor.
Lor. Then I'm sorry—
Sci. Why should you be sorry, sir?
You say it is my sister he would
strumpet,
Mine! Amidea! 'tis a wound you feel not;
But it strikes through and through the poor Sciarrha.
I do not think but all the ashes of
My ancestors do swell in their dark urns,
At this report of Amidea's shame:
It is their cause, as well as mine; and, should
Heaven suffer the duke's sin to pass unpunished,
Their dust must of necessity conspire
To make an earthquake in the temple.
Lor. Sir,
You said you would hear me out.
Sci. Why, is there more
Behind?
Lor. And greater: master your high blood
Till I conclude, Sciarrha. I accuse not
Your noble anger, which, I have observed,
Is not on every cheap and giddy motion
Inflamed; but, sir, be thrifty in your passion;
This is a petty trespass.
Sci. Has mischief any name
Beyond this? will it kill me with the sound?
Lor. My lord, though the dishonoring your sister
Be such a fact the blood of any other
But Alexander could no less than expiate,
Yet this sin stretches farther, and involves,
With hers, your greater stain. Did you e'er promise him— [*Breaks off without completing the question.*
Yet, why do I make any questiön?
It were another crime to think Sciarrha
Could entertain a thought so far beneath
His birth.—You stoop to such a horrid baseness!
Then all the virtue of mankind would sicken,
And soon take leave of earth.
Sci. You torture me.
Lor. What then could the duke find, to give him any
Encouragement you would be guilty of
An act so fatal unto honor? What,
When you were least yourself (as we are all
Frail compositions), did appear so wicked
In you he should conceive a hope and flatter
Himself with possibility to corrupt
Your soul to a deed so monstrous?
Sci. To what?

Lor. Though all the teeming glories of his dukedom,
Nay, Florence' state, offered itself a bribe,
And tempted the betraying of your name
To infamy, yet to imagine you
Would turn officious pander to his lust,
And interpose the mercenary bawd
To court your sister to his sinful coupling!
'Tis horrid, affrights nature; I grow stiff
With the imagination.
Sci. Ha!
Lor. Yet this
Was his command I should impose.
Sci. Lorenzo,
I do want breath; my voice is ravished from me;
I am not what I was; or, if I be
Sciarrha thou hast talked to all this while,
Look heedfully about me, and thou may'st
Discover, through some cranny of my flesh,
A fire within; my soul is but one flame,
Extended to all parts of this frail building.
I shall turn ashes, I begin to shrink;
Is not already my complexion altered?
Does not my face look parched, and my skin gather
Into a heap? my breath is hot enough
To thaw the Alps.
Lor. Your fancy would transport you.
Sci. It is my rage; but let it cool, Lorenzo;
And then we'll talk of something, something, sir,
Shall be to purpose.
Lor. <Now the flame is mounted.>
My lord, I have given proof, although he be
My duke and kinsman, I abhor his vices,
Howe'er the world, without examination,
Shoot their malicious noise and stain my actions:
'Tis policy in princes to create
A favorite, who must bear all the guilt
Of things ill managed in the state; if any
Design be happy, 'tis the prince's own.
Heaven knows how I have counselled this young man
By virtue to prevent his fate and govern
With modesty. O the religious days
Of commonwealths! we have outlived that blessing.
Sci. But I have thought a cure for this great state
Imposthume.
Lor. What?
Sci. To lance it; is't not ripe?
Let us draw cuts, whether your hand or mine
Shall do an act for Florence' liberty,
And send this tyrant to another world.
Lor. How! I draw cuts?
Sci. Coy it not thus, Lorenzo,
But answer: by your name and birth, you are
His kinsman, we all know it; that you dwell
In's bosom, great in favor as in blood,
We know that too; and let me tell you more:
We know you but disguise your heart, and wish
Florence would change her title.
Lor. How is this?
Sci. We know you have firm correspondence with
The banished men, whose desperate fortunes wait
Your call to tumult in our streets; all this,
Not to feed your ambition with a dukedom,
By the remove of Alexander, but
To serve your country, and create their peace
Who groan under the tyranny of a proud,
Lascivious monarch.—Is't not true, Lorenzo?
My phrase is blunt, my lord.
Lor. My genius
And thine are friends; I see they have conversed;
And I applaud the wisdom of my stars,
That made me for his friendship who preserves
The same religious fire. I will confess,
When Alexander left his piety
To Florence, I placed him beneath my country,
As we should all; but we have lost our souls,

Or changed our active spirits, for a dull
And lazy sufferance; let this secret be
An argument how much I dare repose
Upon Sciarrha's honor; virtue witness,
I choose no other destiny: command
Lorenzo's fate, dissolve me with your breath;
I'll either live, in your exchange of faith,
A patriot, or die my country's martyr. [210
Sci. Thou hast a fire beyond Prometheus',
To quicken earth; thy flame is but a prophecy
Of that high pyramid the world shall build
To thy immortal name: it was the glory
Of Romans to prefer their empire's safety
To their own lives; they were but men like us, [220
And of the same ingredients, our souls
Create of no inferior substance; ha?
Lor. Heaven knows, I've no particular design
To leap into a throne; I will disclaim
The privilege of blood; let me advance
Our liberty, restore the ancient laws
Of the republic, rescue from the jaws
Of lust your mothers, wives, your daughters, sisters— [230
Sci. Sisters!
Lor. From horrid rape—'las, Amidea!
Sci. I am resolved; by all that's blest, he dies.
Return my willingness to be his pander,
My sister's readiness to meet his dalliance;
His promises have bought our shame. He dies; [239
The roof he would dishonor with his lust
Shall be his tomb. Bid him be confident;
Conduct him, good Lorenzo; I'll dispose
My house for this great scene of death.
Lor. Be constant. [*Exit.*

Enter Florio *and* Amidea.

Flo. Now, brother, what news brings the great Lorenzo?
Sci. <Let me have truce, vexation, for some minutes.> [249
What news? preferments, honors, offices.—
Sister, you must to court.
Ami. Who, I to court?
Sci. Or else the court will come to you. The duke
Hath sent already for us, Amidea:
O that I knew what happy stars did govern
At thy nativity! It were no sin
To adore their influence.
Ami. What means my brother? [260
Flo. He is transported.
Ami. I shall suspect your health.
Sci. I easily could forget I am Sciarrha,
And fall in love myself.—Is she not fair,
Exceeding beautiful, and tempting, Florio?
Look on her well; methinks I could turn poet,
And make her a more excellent piece than Heaven. [270
Let not fond men hereafter commend what
They most admire, by fetching from the stars,
Or flowers, their glory of similitude,
But from thyself the rule to know all beauty;
And he that shall arrive at so much boldness,
To say his mistress' eyes, or voice, or breath, [281
Are half so bright, so clear, so sweet as thine,
Hath told the world enough of miracle.
These are the duke's own raptures, Amidea;
His own poetic flames; an argument
He loves my sister.
Ami. Love[s] me? [289
Sci. Infinitely.
I am in earnest; he employed Lorenzo,
No meaner person, in this embassy;
You must to court. Oh happiness!
Ami. For what?
Sci. What do great ladies do at court, I pray?
Enjoy the pleasures of the world, dance, kiss
The amorous lords, and change court breath; sing; lose [300
Belief of other Heaven; tell wanton dreams;

Rehearse their sprightly bed-scenes, and boast which
Hath most idolaters; accuse all faces
That trust to the simplicity of nature;
Talk witty blasphemy;
Discourse their gaudy wardrobes; plot new pride;
Jest upon courtiers' legs; laugh at the wagging
Of their own feathers; and a thousand more
Delights which private ladies never think of.
But, above all, and wherein thou shalt make
All other beauties envy thee, the duke,
The duke himself shall call thee his, and single
From the fair troop thy person forth, to exchange
Embraces with, lay siege to these soft lips,
And not remove, till he hath sucked thy heart,
Which, soon dissolved with thy sweet breath, shall be
Made part of his, at the same instant he
Conveying a new soul into thy breast
With a creating kiss.

AMI. You make me wonder;
Pray speak, that I may understand.

SCI. Why will you
Appear so ignorant? I speak the dialect
Of Florence to you. Come, I find you're cunning;
The news does please; the rolling of your eye
Betrays you; and I see a guilty blush,
Through this white veil, upon your cheek; you would
Have it confirmed; you shall; the duke himself
Shall swear he loves you.

AMI. Love[s] me! why?

SCI. To court,
And ask him; be not you too peevish now,
And hinder all our fortune: I have promised him,
To move you for his armful, as I am
Sciarrha and your brother; more, I have sent
Word to him by Lorenzo that you should
Meet his high flame; in plain Italian,
Love him, and—

AMI. What, for Heaven! be the duke's whore?

SCI. No, no, his mistress; command him, make us.

AMI. Give up my virgin honor to his lust?

SCI. You may give it a better name; but do it.

AMI. I do mistake you, brother, do I not?

SCI. No, no, my meaning is so broad you cannot.

AMI. I would I did then. Is't not possible
That this should be a dream? where did you drop
Your virtue, sir?—Florio, why move you not?
Why are you slow to tell this man—for sure
'Tis not Sciarrha—he hath talked so ill
And so much that we may have cause to fear
The air about's infected?

FLO. Are not you
My brother?

SCI. Be not you a fool, to move
These empty questiöns, but join to make her
Supple and pliant for the duke. I hope
We are not the first have been advanced by a wagtail: [1]
No matter for the talk of musty people,
Look up to the reward; thou art young and skilled
In these court temptings, naturally soft
And moving; I am rough-hewn; assist, wilt,
With some quaint charm, to win her to this game?

FLO. My sister?

SCI. Ay, ay.

AMI. Come not near him, Florio;
'Tis not Sciarrha; sure, my brother's nurse

[1] wanton.

Played the impostor, and with some base issue
Cheated our house.
SCI. Gipsy, use better language,
Or I'll forget your sex.
FLO. Offer to touch her
With any rudeness, and, by all that's virtuous— [410
SCI. Why, how now, boy?
FLO., *drawing his sword.* I do not fear your sword;
This, with my youth and innocence, is more
Defence than all thy armory. What devil
Has crept into thy soul?
SCI. You will not help?
FLO. I'll rather[2] kill thee.
SCI. 'Tis very well.— [420
Have you considered better o' the motion?
AMI. Yes.
SCI. And what is your resolve?
AMI. To have my name
Stand in the ivory register of virgins
When I am dead. Before one factious thought
Should lurk within me to betray my fame
To such a blot, my hands shall mutiny,
And boldly with a poniard teach my heart
To weep out a repentance. [432
SCI. Let me kiss thee,
My excellent, chaste sister.—Florio,
Thou hast my soul.—I did but try your virtues.—
'Tis truth, the duke does love thee, viciously;
Let him, let him! he comes to be our guest; [440
This night he means to revel at our house.
The Tarquin shall be entertained; he shall.

Enter a SERVANT.

SER. My lord, Pisano is come. [*Exit.*
SCI. I had forgot his promise.—Look up, sister,
And shine with thy own smiles; Pisano's come— [449
Pisano, thy contracted, honored friend;
A gentleman so rich in hopes, we shall
Be happy in's alliance.—

[2] Q, never.

Enter PISANO, COSMO, *and* FREDERICO.

Welcome all;—
But you above the rest, my brother shortly.—
Sister, and Florio, entertain your noble
Friends; some few minutes I am absent. We [459
Must not forget prepare for the duke's coming.
I'll soon return. [*Exit.*
AMI. You are not cheerful, sir;
How is't, my lord? you were not wont to look
So sad when you came hither.
PIS. I am not
Well, Amidea.
AMI. Oh my heart! [469
PIS. Be you
Comforted, lady; let all griefs repair
To this, their proper centre. [*Lays his hand on his breast.*
FLO. Sir, how fare you?
PIS. Altered of late a little.
FRED. <Virtuous lady!
I cannot choose but pity her and accuse
Pisano's levity.>
PIS. Would he were come back!
I might have finished ere he went, and not [481
Delayed his business much; two or three words,
And I had dispatched.
AMI. How, sir? your language is
Another than you used to speak; you look not
With the same brow upon me.
COS. <'Las! sweet lady.
But who shall accuse me?> [490
PIS. We shall expect too long.—Lady, I am come
To render all my interest in your love,
And to demand myself again; live happier
In other choice, fair Amidea; 'tis
Some shame to say my heart's revolted.
AMI. Ha!
PIS. Here's witness all is cancellëd betwixt us; [500
Nay, an you weep—Farewell!
AMI. He's gone!
FLO. I am amazed.

Pis. Now lead me to my blessing.
[*Exeunt* Pisano, Cosmo, *and* Frederico.
Flo. Shall a long suit and speeding in his love,
With the world's notice, and a general fame [509
Of contract too, just in the instant when
A marriage is expected, be broke off
With infamy to our house?
Ami. Brother, if ever
You loved poor Amidea, let not this
Arrive Sciarrha's ear; there's danger in
His knowledge of it; this may be a trial
Of my affection.
Flo. A trial! no, it showed
Too like a truth. [519
Ami. My tears entreat your silence.
Flo. You have power to command it; dry your eyes then,
He is returned.

Re-enter Sciarrha.

Sci. How now!
Weeping? Where is Pisano, and his friends?
Flo. They're gone, sir.
Sci. Ha!
Ami. Guess by my eyes you may, [530
Something of sorrow hath befallen; no sooner
You were departed, but some strange distemper
Invaded him; we might discern a change
In's countenance; and, though we prayed him to
Repose with us, he would straight back again;
So, with Frederico and Signior Cosmo, he
Returned. [541
Flo. The alteration was strange and sudden.
Sci. 'Las! noble gentleman—but come, clear up
Your face again, we hope it will not last:
Look bright again, I say; I have given order—

Enter a Gentleman.

Gent. My lord, the duke's already come. [*Exit.* [551
Sci. Remove,
Good Amidea, and reserve thy person
To crown his entertainment; be not seen yet. [*Exit* Amidea.

Enter Duke, Lorenzo, Alonzo, *and Attendants.*

Duke. Sciarrha, we are come to be your guest.
Sci. Your highness doth an honor to our house. [561
Duke. But where's thy sister? she must bid us welcome.
Sci. She is your grace's handmaid.
Duke. For this night
Let the whole world conspire to our delight.—
Lorenzo— [*Whispers to him.*
Lor. Sir, be confident—<and perish.>

Scene II

Morosa, Oriana, *and a Servant are in the garden of* Morosa's *house.*

Mor. You should not rashly give away your heart;
Nor must you, without me, dispose yourself.—
[*To the Servant.*] Pray give access to none; yet, if Pisano
Inquire, direct him to the garden.—[*Exit Servant.*] Cosmo [10
Is young and promising, but, while Lorenzo
Lives, must expect no sunshine.

Re-enter Servant with Pisano *and* Cosmo.

Pis. There's for thy pains.—
[*Gives money to the Servant, who goes out.*
<They are now at opportunity.
Cos. My lord,
Do you prepare the mother, and let me close [21
With Oriana.
Pis. What service can reward thee?
Cos. Take occasion
To leave us private; this hour be propitious!
Win but the matron to you.
Pis. She is prepared already.
Cos. Lose no time; [29
Take the other walk.> [Pisano *salutes* Morosa, *and passes out in conversation with her.*

ORI. My dear Cosmo.
COS. My best Oriana.
ORI. You have been too much absent, I must chide you.
COS. You cannot, sweet; I would I knew which way
To make thee angry; yes, that I might see
How well it would become thee. I do fear
Thou art some angel, and that sin would be
An argument to me that thou wert mortal;
I must suspect thy too much goodness else,
And leave thee for the fellowship of saints;
I am too wicked.
ORI. You will make me angry.
COS. But you will love me still, I fear.
ORI. Do you fear it? Is't a misfortune?
COS. What?
ORI. My love.
COS. Your anger;
And yet the t'other oftentimes may carry
An evil with it; we may love too well;
And that's a fault.
ORI. Not where the object's good.
COS. O yes: always beware of the extremes.
ORI. What mean you? I affect none but my Cosmo,
Nor him with too much flame.
COS. If you should, lady, 'Twere nobly done.
ORI. To love another?
COS. Yes;
If there be cause, that may be called a virtue:
For what have I to engross the affectiön
Of any lady, if she can discern
A greater merit in some other man?
Wisdom forbid but she command her smiles
To warm and cherish him.
ORI. So we should be
Inconstant.
COS. Why not? if our reason be
Convinced that's no such fault, as the world goes.
Let us examine all the creatures, read
The book of nature through, and we shall find
Nothing doth still the same; the stars do wander
And have their divers influence; the elements
Shuffle into innumerable changes;
Our constitutions vary; herbs and trees
Admit their frost and summer; and why then
Should our desires, that are so nimble and
More subtle than the spirits in our blood,
Be such stayed things within us and not share
Their natural liberty? Shall we admit a change
In smaller things, and not allow it in
What most of all concerns us?
ORI. What?
COS. Our loves.
ORI. Have you suspicion I am changed, and thus
Would school me for it? or shall I imagine
That you are altered?
COS. Yes, I am, and therefore
Proclaim thy freedom; I do love thee less,
To show I love thee more.
ORI. What riddle's this?
COS. I will explain. Upon maturity
Of counsel, Oriana, I have found
I am not worthy of thee, therefore come
To make thee satisfaction for my sin
Of loving thee, by pointing out a way
And person will become thy affection better.
ORI. You have a pretty humor.
COS. What dost think
Of brave Pisano? shall his merit plead
Succession in thy chaste thoughts?
ORI. I do know him.
COS. Thou canst not choose, and I could study none
Worthy thy love but him.
ORI. 'Tis very likely
You would resign then?
COS. Ay, to honor thee;

His service will deserve thee at the best
And richest value:
ORI. Why, it shall be so.
COS. Nay, but be serious, and declare me happy,
That I may say, I have made thee just amends,
And I will thank thee.
ORI. Why, sir, I do love him.
COS. Oh, when did Cupid aim that golden shaft?
But dost thou love him perfectly, with a
Desire, when sacred rites of marriäge
Are past, to meet him in thy bed and call him
Thy husband?
ORI. Why, sir, did you ever think
I was so taken with your worth and person,
I could not love another lord as well?
By your favor, there be many as proper men
And as deserving; you may save your plea;
And be assured I need no lesson to
Direct my fancy. I did love Pisano
Before; but, for your sake, I mean to place him
A great deal nearer. <Sure he does but jest.>
You did love me.
COS. Now, by my heart, I love thee.
This act shall crown our story, Oriana,
Thou dost not know how much thou honorest me,
For he's not in the common list of friends,
And he does love thee past imagination.
Next his religion he has placed the thought
Of Oriana; he sleeps nothing else,
And I shall wake him into Heaven, to say
Thou hast consented to be his.
ORI. Pray tell me,
But truly, I beseech you; do you wish
Pisano mine indeed? or are you jealous,
And name him to accuse me?
COS. Not, by goodness;
But, if there be a charm beyond thy innocence,
By that I would conjúre thee, Oriana,
Love him and make three happy; it shall be
My bliss to call you his, let me but own
A servant in your memory.
ORI. Unkind
And cruel Cosmo! dost thou think it possible
I can love any but thyself? thou wilt
Undo my heart for ever.

Re-enter PISANO *and* MOROSA.

MOR. <You shall be
Ever most welcome. If I be her mother,
She must declare obedience.> Oriana.
COS. <Go cheerfully, thy mother calls to him
Whose orator I have been. > <'Las, poor lady!
I half repent me, since she is so constant;
But a friend's life weighs down all other love;
Beside, I thus secure my fate; Lorenzo
Threatens my spring; he is my enemy.>
ORI. You'll not compel affection?
PIS. No, but court it;
With honor and religion thus invite it.
MOR. I shall forget the nature of a parent,
Unless you show more softness and regard
To what is urged. What promise could you make
To Cosmo without me? or, if you had—
COS. Here Cosmo doth give up all title to it;
I have no part in Oriana now.
ORI. I've heard too much; do with me what you please,
I am all passive, nothing of myself,
But an obedience to unhappiness. [*Exit.*
COS. Follow her, Pisano.
PIS. Thou art all friendship.
COS. Trace their warm steps, virgins' resolves are weak.
Leave not her eyes until you see day break. [*Exeunt.*

ACT THREE

Scene I

Depazzi *is beginning to feel the strain of keeping pace with* Lorenzo *too much for his nerves. In a room in his house he partly unburdens his mind to* Rogero.

Dep. Rogero!

Rog. My lord.

Dep. Make fast the chamber door, stifle the keyhole and the crannies, I must discourse of secret matters; dost thou smell nothing, Rogero? ha? [10

Rog. Smell? not anything, my lord, to offend my nostril.

Dep. Come hither; what do the people talk abroad of me? Answer me justly, and to the point; what do they say?

Rog. Faith, my lord, they say that you are—

Dep. They lie, I am not; they are a lousy, impudent multitude, a many-headed, and many-horned generation, to say that I am— [21

Rog. A noble gentleman, a just and discreet lord, and one that deserved to have his honors without money.

Dep. Oh, is that it? I thought the rabble would have said I had been a traitor. <I am half mad, certainly, ever since I consented to Lorenzo; 'tis a very hard condition, that a man must lose his head to recompense the procuring of his honors. What if I discover him to the [31 duke? Ten to one, if Lorenzo come but to speak, his grace will not have the grace to believe me, and then I run the hazard to be thrown out of all on t'other side: 'tis safest to be a traitor.> Hum, who is that you whispered to?

Rog. I whisper?

Dep. Marry did you, sirrah.

Rog. Not I, good faith, my lord. [40

Dep. Sirrah, sirrah, sirrah, I smell a rat behind the hangings. [*Takes up the hangings.*]—Here's nobody; ha? are there no trunks[1] to convey secret voices?

Rog. Your lordship has a pair[2] on.

Dep. <I do not like that face in the arras; on my conscience he points at me. 'Pox upon this treason, I have no stomach to't; I do see myself upon a scaffold, making a pitiful speech already; I [50 shall have my head cut off. Seven years ago I laid my head upon a wager, I remember, and lost it; let me see, it shall be so: 'tis good policy to be armed.> Rogero, imagine I were a traitor.

Rog. How, sir?

Dep. I but say "imagine" (we may put the case), and that I were apprehended for a traitor.

Rog. Heaven defend! [60

Dep. Heaven has something else to do than to defend traitors. I say, imagine I were brought to the bar.

Rog. Good my lord! you brought to the bar?

Dep. I will beat you, if you will not imagine, at my bidding: I say, suppose I now were at the bar, to answer for my life.

Rog. Well, sir? [70

Dep. Well, sir, that's as it happens; you must imagine I will answer the best I can for myself. Conceive, I prithee, that these chairs were judges, most grave and venerable beards and faces, at my arraignment, and that thyself wert, in the name of the duke and state, to accuse me; what couldst thou say to me?

Rog. I accuse your good honor? for what, I beseech you? [80

Dep. For high treason, you blockhead.

Rog. I must be acquainted with some particulars first.

Dep. Mass, thou sayest right: why, imagine—do you hear? you must but imagine—that some great man had a conspiracy against the duke's person, and that I, being an honest lord, and one of this great man's friends, had been drawn in, for that's the plain truth on't; 'twas [90 against my will, but that's all one. Well, thou understand'st me; show thy wit, Rogero, scratch thy nimble pericranium, and thunder out my accusation *ex tempore*. Here I stand, Signior Depazzi, ready to answer the indictment.

Rog. Good my lord, it will not become me, being your humble servant. [98

[1] tubes.
[2] giving another meaning to the word "trunks."

Dep. Humble coxcomb! is it not for my good? I say, accuse me, bring it home, jerk me soundly to the quick, Rogero, tickle me, as thou lov'st thy lord; I do defy thee; spare me not, and the devil take thee if thou be'st not malicious.

Rog. Why, then, have at you. First, Signior Depazzi, thou art indicted of high treason. Hold up thy hand; guilty, or not guilty?

Dep. Very good. [109

Rog. Nay, very bad, sir. Answer, I say; guilty or not guilty?

Dep. Not guilty.

Rog. 'Tis your best course to say so. Well, imagine I rise up the duke's most learned in the laws, and his nimble-tongued orator; have at you, signior.

Dep. Come, come on, sir, here I stand.

Rog. I will prove thou liest in thy throat, if thou deniest thy treason, and so I address myself to the most under- [120 standing seats of justice.—"Most wise, most honorable, and most incorrupt judges, sleep not, I beseech you; my place hath called me to plead, in the behalf of my prince and country, against this notable, this pernicious and impudent traitor, who hath plotted and contrived such high, heinous, and horrible treasons as no age nor history hath ever mentioned the like. Here he stands, [130 whose birth I will not touch, because it is altogether unknown who begot him. He was brought up among the small wares in the city, became rich by sinister and indirect practices, married a merchant's wife at adventures, and was soon after advanced to be a head-officer."

Dep. Why, you rascal!

Rog. Peace, sirrah, peace!—"Nay, your lordships shall find him very audacious: this fellow, not content to have his [141 branches spread within the city (I speak it to his face, let him deny it), was afterward, by the corruption of his confederate and the mere grace of his highness, raised to honor, received infinite favors from his prince of blessed memory, yet, like a wretch, a villain, a viper, a rat of Nilus, he hath practised treasons against the sacred person of the duke, for which he deserveth not only to die, but also [151 to suffer tortures, whips, racks, strapadoes, wheels, and all the fiery brazen bulls that can be invented, as I shall make it appear to this honorable and illustrious court."

Dep. This rogue's transported.

Rog. "With all my heart; I obey your lordships. Thus then I pass from these circumstances, and proceed to the [160 principal villainies that we have to lay to his charge. *Imprimis*, thou, Signior Depazzi, didst offer to a groom one hundred crowns to poison his highness' hunting-saddle."

Dep. Did I?

Rog. Do not interrupt me, varlet; I will prove it;—"his hunting-saddle, and woe shall be unto thy breech therefore; and, finding this serpentine treason [170 broken in the shell—do but lend your reverend ears to his next designs: I will cut them off presently—this irreligious, nay, atheistical traitor, did with his own hands poison the duke's prayer-book; oh, impiety! and, had his highness, as in former times he accustomed, but prayed once in a month, which, by special grace, he omitted, how fatal had it been to Florence! but, as by justice his excel- [180 lence did then, and by his own want of devotion, prevent this assassinate's purpose, so we hope, in his own discretion and the counsel of his state, he will take heed how he prays hereafter while he lives, to which every true subject will say, Amen."

Dep. "May it please your honors—"

Rog. Thou impudent, brazen-faced traitor, wilt thou deny it? "Moreover, [190 an't like your good lordships, he hath for this fortnight or three weeks before his apprehension, walked up and down the court with a case of pistols charged, wherewith, as he partly confessed, he intended to send the duke to Heaven with a powder!"

Dep. This rogue will undo the devil at invention.—"May it please this honorable—" [200

Rog. "These are but sprinklings of his treason."

Dep. Will you justify this? did I any of these things, you tadpole?

Rog. Hold yourself contented, my lord; he that is brought to the bar in case of treason must look to have more objected than he can answer, or any man is able to justify.

Dep. "I confess, an't please your good lordships—" [211

Rog. "Mark, he will confess—"

Dep. That's the way to be sent of a headless errand.—"Indeed I confess that I never intended any treason to his highness, nor ever sought the prince's life; true it is, that I heard of a conspiracy."

Rog. "That, that, my lords, hath overthrown him; he saith he never sought the prince's life, *ergo*, he sought his death; besides, he hath heard of treason; [221 now, he that heareth and discovereth not is equally guilty in fact: for in offences of this nature there are no accessories, *ergo*, he is a principal, and being a principal traitor, he deserveth condemnation."

Dep. Shall I not speak?

Rog. "No, traitors must not be suffered to speak, for when they have leave, they have liberty, and he that is a traitor deserveth to be close prisoner." [231

Dep. "All that this fellow hath uttered is false and forged, abominable lies."

Rog. "I will speak truth, and I will be heard, and no man else, in this place."

Dep. "I never dreamt of a hunting-saddle, nor never had so much as a thought of any prayer-book."

Rog. "You sit here to do justice; I speak for the duke, and the safety of [240 the commonwealth."

Dep. "As for pistols, 'tis well known, I could never endure the report of them. I defy powder and shot as I do him that accuseth me."

Rog. "I defy all the world that will hear a traitor speak for himself; 'tis against the law, which provides that no man shall defend treason, and he that speaks for himself, being a traitor, doth defend his treason: thou art a capital obstreperous malefactor." [252

Dep. Thou art a madman.

Rog. Go to, you have played the fool too much.

Dep. Thou continual motion, cease; a pox upon thee, hold thy tongue.

Rog. The pox will not serve your turn.

Dep. Why, then this shall. [*Beats him.*

Rog. Hold, hold, good my lord, I [260 am sensible; I have done, imagine I have done; I but obeyed your lordship, whose batoon I find stronger than my imagination.—My lord, you will answer this, to strike in the court thus.

Dep. I am as weary—hark, Rogero, [*Knocking within.*]—one knocks; see, see; there's to make thee amends. [*Gives him money.*] See, good Rogero, and say nothing. [*Exit Rogero.*]—Pray Heaven it be no pursuivant. [271

Re-enter Rogero *with* Petruchio, *bearing a letter.*

Rog. Petruchio, my Lord Pisano's secretary.

Dep. <But Lorenzo's engine, a very knave.>

Pet. My very good lord. [*Gives him the letter.* [279

Dep. What's here? it can be no goodness. <"My lord, I would not have you go to bed to-night,"—he will not let me sleep now, I dreamt as much—"something will be done to give Florence liberty. In the depth of night you may cunningly disperse some rumors in the city that the duke is dead; the people must be distracted; in the common fright be not you wanting in your person to assist their fears, and speak well of— [290 Lorenzo.—" Speak well of the devil.> My humble service to your lord, and say he has power to command me in all things.

Pet. My very good lord.

Dep. <No matter an you were both hanged.> Rogero, show him the wine cellar. [*Exeunt* Rogero *and* Petruchio.] —Let me see, I must report the duke's death; I cannot abide this word "death;"

yet he desires me but to report it: hum, if it be false, why, so much the better; there will be less harm in it; if it [303 should prove true, they will believe me another time: well, I will drink myself half drunk and be fortified.

Scene II

In Sciarrha's *house, the* Duke *and* Lorenzo *are being entertained. All preparations have been made for a masque. Beside the* Duke *is seated* Amidea. Sciarrha, Florio, *and Attendants are also present.*

Duke. Sciarrha, you exceed in entertainment;
Banquet our eyes too?
Lor. He will feast all senses. [10
Sci. Only a toy, my lord; I cannot call't
A masque, nor worthy of this presence, yet
It speaks the freedom of my heart, and gratitude
For this great honor.
Duke. Amidea must
Sit near us, [19
Sci. Lords, your places; 'twill not be
Worth half this ceremony.—Let them begin.

Enter Lust, *richly apparelled, the* Pleasures *attending.*

Duke. Who's the presenter?
Sci. Lust, sir; pray observe.
Lust.
Now let Lust possess the throne
Of Love, and rule in hearts alone:
You sweet tempters to my sin [30
Beauty, smiles, and kisses win
Upon frail mortals; let them know
There is no happiness but you.
Shoot no arrows tipped with lead,
Each shaft have his golden head.
Call no love, delude men still;
Through the flesh their spirits kill;
Nor spend all your heart to take
Common persons; greatness make,
By your potent charms, to be [40
Subjects unto hell and me:
Inflame but kings with loose desire,
You soon set all the world on fire.

Enter a Young Man *richly habited, and crowned.*

Duke. What's he?
Sci. A wild young man, that follows Lust:
He has too much blood, it seems.
Duke. Why looks he back? [50
Sci. There is a thing called Death, that follows him;
With a large train of Furies; but the Syrens
Of Lust make him secure, and now the hag
Embraces him, and circles him with pleasures;
The harpies mean to dance too.—[*Here* Lust, *the* Pleasures, *and the* [60 Young Man *join in a Dance.*
Hang his conscience!
It whines too much.
Lor. <This is too plain.>
Sci. He does not tremble yet.—
By-and-by, sir, you shall see all his tormentors
Join with them; there's the sport on't.
Lor. Methinks they
Should have been first, for th' ante- [70 masque.
Sci. Oh no!
In hell they do not stand upon the method,
As we at court; the grand masque and the glory
Begin the revels.—

Enter Death.

Sister, you do ill [79
To keep the duke in talk; he cannot see
The devil for you, and the whips: does not
That death's head look most temptingly? the worms
Have kissed the lips off.—

Enter Furies, who join in the dance, and in the end carry the Young Man *away. The rest flee in confusion.*

How does your highness like this dance?
Duke. My eyes so feasted here, I did not mark it; [91

But I presume 'twas handsome.
Sci. <O the lethargy
Of princes!> We have kept you, sir, from bed.—
More lights.
Duke. Good night to all! [*To* Amidea.] To you the best.
Sciarrha, bind us ever by performance.
Sci. We are all yours.
Duke. And Florence thine.—Once more—
Brightest of ladies.
Lor., *to* Sciarrha. <You are firm?
Sci. Suspect not.> [*Exeunt all but* Amidea *and* Florio.
Flo. I do not like my brother's moral masque;
The duke himself was personated: I
Wonder it did not startle him.
Ami. I hope
Sciarrha does not mean so ill as that
Did promise. He's returned; his looks are full

Re-enter Sciarrha.

Of threat'ning.
Sci. Amidea, go not to bed;
And yet no matter; I can do't alone.
Take both your rest, and in your prayers commend
The duke to Heaven; 'tis charity; has made
His will already, and bequeathed his body
To you, sister; pity his soul, 'tis[3] now
Within few minutes of departing.
Ami. How?
Sci. Why, this way; [*showing a poniard*] I must help him in his groans,
To bring his flesh a-bed.
Ami. You will not kill him?
Sci. I am not of your mind.
Ami. I know you cannot.
Sci. You are not studied so perfect in
His destiny, I hope; I will endeavor—
Ami. To kill your prince?
Flo. What, here?
Sci. No, in his chamber.
Ami. Shall it be read in stories of our Florence,
Sciarrha first did stain his family
With such a treason?
Flo. Was he not invited?
Sci. Yes, by his lust.
Flo. And in your crownëd tables
And hospitality will you murder him?
Sci. Yes, and the reason wherefore he was murdered
Shall justify the deed to all posterity;
He came to wrong my sister.
Flo. Wanton heat;
Let youthful blood excuse him.
Sci. So it must.
Flo. Mistake me not; oh, think but who he is;
The duke: that word must needs awake your piety.
Ami. How will good men in this remembrance
Abhor your cruelty, that send to hell
One with the weight of all his sins upon him?
Sci. It is too late to cool with argument
My incensed blood. Will you go dally with him,
And let him board your pinnace? I have gone
So far in promise, if you clasp not with him,
It will be dangerous if he outlive
This night.
Ami. I have thought on't; send him to my bed.
Sci. Ha!
Ami. Do not question what I purpose; Heaven
Witness to my chaste thoughts.
Sci. Wilt thou trust him?
Ami. I will do much, sir, to preserve his life
And your innocence: be not you suspectful;
At the worst you can but respite your revenge.
Sci. Dost thou not fear unhappy Lucrece' chance,
Or wretched Philomel's dishonor?
Ami. No:
Give me his life, and send your wanton to me:
I'll to my chamber; fear me not, Sciarrha;

[3] B. for 'tis.

Have not one thought so bad I shall not prosper;
Virgins in Heaven will suffer with me.
FLO. Trust her. [*Exeunt* AMIDEA *and* FLORIO.
SCI. 'Tis but deferring of my justice;
She will not kill him, sure; draw on her soul
The guilt she hates in mine; if she do yield
To the hot encounter, ha! 'twill [then] be just,
That both their hearts weep blood, to purge their lust.

SCENE III

FLORIO *and* AMIDEA *are in* AMIDEA'S *bedroom.*

FLO. My poniard?
AMI. I've no black intent
To stain't with any blood.
FLO. Take it; I know
Thou art my virtuous sister; it were wickedness
To doubt thy purpose or the event.
AMI. Now leave me.
FLO. Thou hast a guard of angels.
AMI. They are coming.
[FLORIO *conceals himself behind the hangings.*

Enter SCIARRHA *and the* DUKE.

SCI. Look, there she is, sir: you know how to undress her.
DUKE. Dearest Sciarrha.
SCI. To your recreation.— <Here I'll obscure myself. [*Sees* FLORIO *as he retires behind the hangings.*] —Florio! 'tis well.>
DUKE. Lady, you know me?
AMI. Yes; my prince.
DUKE. I was so
Till I saw thee, but I gave up that title
A conquest to thy beauty, which, among
Her other wonders, hath created me
A subject and [a] servant, and I shall
Be happier to be received yours by
One of those names than Duke of Tuscany.
AMI. Oh, take yourself again; use your greatness
To make the hearts of Florence bow to you,
And pay their duties thus. [*Kneels.*
DUKE. Rise, Amidea,
And since you have given my power back, it will
Become me to command.
AMI. And me to obey. [*Rises.*
DUKE. I see thy noble brother hath been faithful
To my desires; he has prepared thee with
A story of my love, which thou reward'st
With too much humbleness: thou hast a quarrel,
And a just one, with thy stars, that did not make thee
A princess, Amidea; yet thou'rt greater,
And born to justify unto these times,
Venus, the queen of Love, was but thy figure,
And all her graces prophecies of thine,
To make our last age best. I could dwell ever
Here, and imagine I am in a temple,
To offer on this altar of thy lip [*Kisses her often.*
Myriads of flaming kisses, with a cloud
Of sighs breathed from my heart,
Which, by the oblation, would increase his stock,
To make my pay eternal.
AMI. What mean you?
DUKE. That question is propounded timely: hadst thou
Not interrupted me, I should have lost
Myself upon thy lips, and quite forgot
There is a bliss beyond it, which I came for.
Let others satisfy themselves to read
The wonders in thy face, make proud their eye,
By seeing thine, turn statues at thy voice,
And think they never fix enough to hear thee.
A man half dead with famine would wish here
To feed on smiles, of which the least hath power
To call an anchorite from his prayers, tempt saints

To wish their bodies on. Thou dost with ease
Captivate kings with every beam, and mayst
Lead them like prisoners round about the world,
Proud of such golden chains; this were enough,
Had not my fate provided more, to make me
Believe myself immortal in thy touches.
Come to thy bed, transform me there to happiness;
I'll laugh at all the fables of the gods,
And teach our poets after I know thee,
To write the true Elysium.

AMI. Good my lord,
I understand you not, and yet I fear
You do not mean well; if you have brought with you
A sinful purpose, which I may suspect—

DUKE. Why, lady, what do you imagine I
Came hither for?

AMI. I know not.

DUKE. How!
Is't come to that? your brother gave you more
Desirous of the sport, and brought me hither,
Ripe for your dalliance. Did you not expect me?

AMI. Yes.

DUKE. And to what other purpose?

AMI. To tell you that you are not virtuous.

DUKE. I'm of your mind.

AMI. But I am not so wicked
To be of yours: oh, think but who you are:
Your title speaks you nearest Heaven, and points
You out a glorious reign among the angels;
Do not depose yourself of one, and be
Of the other disinherited.

DUKE. I would
Your brother heard you; prithee, do not waste
This tedious divinity; I am
Resolved to grapple with you.

AMI. Keep off. [*Shows the poniard.*

DUKE. Ha!
Turned Amazon?

AMI. Prince, come not too near me,
For, by my honor, since you have lost your own,
Although I bow in duty to your person,
I hate your black thoughts; tempt not my just hand
With violent approach; I dare, and will
Do that will grieve you, if you have a soul.

DUKE. Thou dar'st not kill me!

AMI. True, but I dare die.

DUKE. Be thy own murderer?

AMI. Rather than you should be my ravisher.

DUKE. Thou canst not be so merciless; 'tis less sin
To be unchaste. I am thy prince; I prithee
Throw by that cruel weapon; let our war
Be soft embraces, shooting amorous smiles,
Kill and restore each other with a kiss.
I know thou canst not be unkind so long:
Then, I command thee.

AMI. I must not obey,
To be your strumpet: though my hand be unskilful,
I shall soon find my heart.

DUKE. I'll not believe—

AMI. Let this deserve your faith I dare be just, [*She wounds her arm.*
This crimson river issuing from my arm.

DUKE. Hold!

AMI. Never; it shall flow, and, if this channel
Yield not enough, I'll strike another vein,
And after that, another, and not pity
The murmuring stream, till through a prodigal wound
I have drained the fountain: this doth weep for you,
And shall extol my death, if it may teach
You to correct your blood.

DUKE. There's so much gone
From me, I cool apace; this actiön
Hath shot an ague through me; Amidea,
Pity thyself.

AMI. Not till you swear repentance;

I do not faint yet, 'tis somewhat about,
But I can find a nearer way; this does it.
[Offering to strike herself again.
DUKE. Contain;[4] I am sorry, sorry
from my soul;
Trust me, I do bleed inward, Amidea;
Can answer all thy drops: oh, pardon
me;
Thou faint'st already, dost not? I am
fearful.
The phœnix, with her wings, when she
is dying,
Can fan her ashes into another life;
But when thy breath, more sweet than
all the spice
That helps the other's funeral, returns
To Heaven, the world must be eternal
loser.
Look to thy wound.
AMI. May I believe you, sir?
DUKE. I dare not think awry; again
I ask
Forgiveness; in thy innocence I see
My own deformity.

SCIARRHA, *followed by* FLORIO, *comes hastily from behind the hangings and embraces* AMIDEA.

SCI. Now a thousand blessings
Reward thy goodness; thou deserv'st a
statue,
A tall one, which should reach above the
clouds,
Jostle the moon, that people afar off
Beholding it, may be invited hither,
In hope to climb to Heaven by't; but
apply
Betimes unto thy wound.—Florio, assist
her. [FLORIO *leads off* AMIDEA.
And now, my lord—
DUKE. Sciarrha, I'll begin to be thy
lord;
I brought intentions of dishonor to thee
And thy fair sister, but I am reconciled
To virtue, and will study how to satisfy
For you and Florence.
SCI. You will be more precious
Than had you never fallen; I am all joy
In your conversion.
[DUKE. Is Lorenzo abed?]
SCI. Lorenzo! I think, he has not said
his prayers yet;
But—
DUKE. What?
SCI. I cannot tell, may be he does
Not use it.
DUKE. How?
SCI. My lord, you now are lovely;
'Twere better you'd forget him; he's not
right
At heart, I fear.
DUKE. Fear nothing.
SCI. To be plain,
You cherish your disease in him, and are
Not safe while he is near you.
DUKE. Do not envy him.[5]
SCI. Then I must tell you, sir, he is a
traitor
Within my knowledge; hath conspired
your death.
DUKE. With whom?
SCI. With me; I should have killed
you, sir,
This night; and every minute he expects
To hear you numbered with the dead.
I can
Demónstrate this: your pardon, but, in
truth,
The injuries you meant us were severe,
And he with as much violence did urge
them,
To your destruction; but your piety
Hath charmed my purpose, and I look
upon you
With new obedience.

Re-enter FLORIO.

DUKE. Impossible!
SCI. We will not shift the scene till
you believe it.—
Florio, entreat my Lord Lorenzo hither.—
[*Exit* FLORIO.
Step but behind the arras, and your ear
Shall tell you who's the greatest traitor
living.
Observe but, when I tell him you are
slain,
How he'll rejoice, and call me Florence'
great
Preserver, bless my arm, that in your
blood

[4] abstain.

[5] Do not bear him ill-will.

Hath given our groaning state a liberty;
Then trust Sciarrha. But obscure: I
hear him. [SCIARRHA *did not, however, hear him soon enough, for* LORENZO *has heard him speaking. Hence, though the* DUKE *has* [291
promptly retired behind the hangings, LORENZO, *as he enters, seeing no one but* SCIARRHA, *scents treachery.*
LOR. <Whom talked he to?>
SCI. 'Tis done—
LOR. What, good Sciarrha?
SCI. The duke is dead.
LOR. We are not left so miserable!
Heav'n is more kind to Florence. [301
SCI. With this hand
I made a passage for his soul.
LOR. Defend,
Omnipotence! what! murdered? and by noble
Sciarrha? how my ear abuses me!
SCI. Did not we plot it too?
LOR. How! we? collect;
I fear you are not well: pray tell me [310
why
You talk thus? where's the duke? he hath a guard,
An army of Heaven about him; who in Florence
Dares be so black a devil to attempt
His death?
SCI. This is fine cunning; why, that devil is
Lorenzo, if he dare deny it; we are in [320
private,
You need appear no stranger to that's done
By your direction.
LOR. I in the practice?
Then let me creep into the earth, and rise
A monster to affright mankind. Sciarrha,
I must abhor thee for it.—Oh my prince!
My dearest kinsman!—may thy hand rot off!— [331
[*Calling.*] Treason, treason!
SCI., *drawing his sword.* Then my sword shall fetch
Another witness in thy heart.

[*As they draw, the* DUKE *comes hastily forth, and interposes.*
DUKE. Hold!
LOR. Tush, let him come, [339
My royal lord; nay, let him kill me now:
I've so much joy and peace about me, 'twere
A sin to wish my life beyond this minute.
DUKE. Put up, I say.
SCI. My lord, we are both cozened:
That very smile's a traitor.
DUKE. Come, be calm:
You are too passionate, Sciarrha, and
Mistook Lorenzo.
LOR. But I hold him noble: [350
I see he made this trial of my faith,
And I forgive him.
DUKE. You shall be friends; you shall, I say.
Enter hastily COSMO *and* ALONZO.
COS. The duke—
ALON. Where's the duke?
COS. My lord, we are blest to see you safe; report
Hath frighted all the city with your death: [361
People forsake their beds, and, seeking how
To be informed, increase the wretched tumult.
ALON. There's nothing but confusion; all men tremble,
As if some general fire invaded Florence.
SCI. Have comfort, sir.
DUKE. What's to be done? [370
LOR. <Depazzi has remembered.>
My lord, there is no safety for the state,
Unless you personally appease them.
DUKE. How?
LOR. <I hope they'll tear him; would he were dead any way!>
ALON. He hath counselled well.
COS. Your presence only hath the power to charm them.
DUKE. I fear their rage: where is our guard?— [381
Alonzo, haste afore, proclaim our pardon,
And that we live to give the offenders mercy.
Why are we born to greatness, mocked with state,

When every tumult staggers our proud fate?

SCI., *to* LORENZO. <Our quarrel is deferred, sir.> [*Exit* LORENZO. [390

ACT FOUR

SCENE I

LORENZO *is alone in a room in his house.*

LOR. My plots thrive not; my engines all deceive me,
And in the very point of their discharge
Recoil with danger to myself; are there
No faithful villains left in nature? all
Turned honest? man nor spirit aid Lorenzo, [8
Who hath not patience to expect his fate,
But must compel it. How Sciarrha played
The dog-bolt with me! and had not I provided
In wisdom for him, that distress had ruined me.
His frozen sister, Amidea, too,
Hath half converted him; but I must set
New wheels in motiön, to make him yet
More hateful, and then cut him from his stalk, [19
Ripe for my vengeance. I'll not trust the rabble;
Confusion on ['em]! the giddy multitude,
That, but two minutes ere the duke came at them,
Bellowed out "Liberty," shook the city with
Their throats, no sooner saw him but they melted
With the hot apprehension of a gallows;
And, when a pardon was proclaimed [30 (a fine
State-snaffle for such mules), they turned their cry
To acclamations, and deafed Heaven to beg
His long and prosperous reign. A sudden rot
Consume this base herd! an the devil want
Any cattle for his own teeth, these are for him. [41

Enter a SERVANT.

SERV. Sciarrha, my lord, desires to speak with you.

LOR. Sciarrha! come near. [*Whispers to him.*] You understand? admit him. [*Exit* SERVANT.

Enter SCIARRHA.

Welcome, my noble lord; you were not wont [50
To visit me.

SCI. Nor mean ever to do't again.

LOR. You bring frowns;
I can be sullen too: what is your pleasure?

SCI. You have abused me.

LOR. You have injured me.

SCI. In what?

LOR. Betrayed me basely to the duke. [60

SCI. You denied then you were a traitor?

LOR. Yes;
I was no fool to run my neck upon
The axe, and give you such a cause of triumph.
Were it again in question—

SCI. You are a villain, sir;
And I
Must have it certified under your own hand, [71
To show the duke.

LOR. You shall be humbled to
Confess the contrary, nay, subscribe
That I am honest, and desire my pardon.
Look, I have a sword, and arm, and vigor;
Dare fight with thee, didst ride upon a whirlwind, [79
Provoke thee on a rock, in waves, in fire,
And kill thee without scruple; such a strength
Is innocence.

SCI. Innocence! dost not fear a thunderbolt?
I shall be charitable to the world, an I
Cut thee in pieces; and yet then I fear
Thou wilt come together again: the devil does [89
Acknowledge thee on earth the greater mischief,

And has a fear, when thou art dead, he shall not
Be safe in hell; thou wilt conspire with some
Of his black fiends, and get his kingdom from him.
Didst not thou rail upon the duke?
LOR. I grant it.
SCI. Call him a tyrant? [100
LOR. More, I do confess
I did exasperate you to kill or murder him;
Give it what name you please; with joy I brought him,
Under the color of your guest, to be
The common sacrifice: all this I remember;
But is Heaven's stock of mercy spent already, [110
That sins, though great and horrid, may not be
Forgiven, to the heart that groans with penitence?
Are the eternal fountains quite sealed up?
I was a villain, traitor, murderer,
In my consenting to his death, but hope
Those stains are now washed off.
SCI. Hast thou repented?
LOR. Trust me, I have. [120
SCI. The devil is turned religious!
Augment not thy damnation.
LOR. As he was
A lustful duke, a tyrant, I had lost him.
In his return to piety, he commanded
My prayers and fresh obedience to wait on him;
He's now my prince again.
SCI. This is but cunning,
To save your life. [130
LOR. My life! [*Calling.*] Within there! Ha!

Enter divers GENTLEMEN, *armed.*

Welcome.
1 GENT. My gracious lord.
2 GENT. Wilt please your honor
Command my service?
3 GENT. Or me?
4 GENT. Or any?
5 GENT. Our swords
And lives are yours. [141

SCI. Perhaps your lordship hath
Some business with these gentlemen; I'll take
Some other time.
LOR. By no means, good Sciarrha:
You visit seldom; those are daily with me,
Men that expect employment, that wear swords, [150
And carry spirits, both to be engaged,
If I but name a cause.—Gentlemen, draw.
SCI. <My providence has betrayed me.>
LOR. Now, Sciarrha,
You that with single valor dare come home
To affront me thus; know, but too late, thy heart [160
Is at the mercy of my breath: these swords
Can fetch it when I please; and, to prevent
Your boast of this great daring—[*To the* GENTLEMEN.] I beseech,
As you do love and honor your Lorenzo,
No hand advance a weapon; sheathe again,
And leave us; I owe service to your loves, [171
But must not so dishonor you.
ALL GENT. We obey. [*Exeunt.*
SCI. <They're gone: this is some nobleness.>
LOR. You see,
I do not fear your sword; alone, I have
Too much advantage; yet you may imagine
How easily I could correct this rashness; [181
But in my fear to offend gracious Heaven
With a new crime, having so late obtained
My peace, I give you freedom.
SCI. Do I dream?
LOR. Pray chide me still; I will be patiënt
To hear my shame. [190
SCI. Is this to be believed?
Doth not Lorenzo counterfeit this virtue?

He does: it is impossible he should repent.
LOR. Why? tell me, Sciarrha, and let us argue awhile
In cooler blood; did not you once resolve
To kill the duke too?
SCI. I confess—
LOR. To give him death with your own hand?
Methinks it should be the same parricide
In you, if not a greater; yet you changed
Your purposes; why did you not go through,
And murder him?
SCI. He was converted.
LOR. Good!
That taught you mercy, and perhaps repentance
For your intent.
SCI. It did.
LOR. Why should not, sir,
The same conversion of the duke possess
My heart with as much piety to him,
And sorrow for myself? If I should say
You are but cunning in this shape of honesty,
And still suspect your soul to be a traitor,
Might you not blame my want of charity?
SCI. <He says but right, we are both men, frail things.>
'Tis not impossible.
LOR. I am reconciled
To Heaven already, and the duke: if you
Be still unsatisfied, I am ready, sir—
SCI. <The circumstance considered, I incline
To think this may be honest.>
LOR. Come, Sciarrha,
We are both hasty: pardon my rash language
In the beginning, I will study service
Shall make you love me; I have been too wicked,
Too full of passion, inexorable;
My nature is corrected; at this minute
I'm friends with all the world, but in your love
Shall number many blessings.
SCI. I am converted.

Enter PETRUCHIO.

LOR. <What's the news?
PET. My lord, Depazzi prays some conference
In the next chamber; we arrived by chance
Together at your gate: I do not like
His talk, sir.
LOR. Hang him, property! let him Expect;[1] thou art come in the opportunity
I could have wished; be wise, and second me.>
SCI. <He waits upon Pisano,
Whose health I may enquire; I have not seen him
Since he departed sick; a fit occasion.>
LOR. Married to Oriana? thou mistak'st,
'Tis Amidea, Lord Sciarrha's sister.
PET. That contract's broken, and the old lady Morosa is violent to have the marriage finished with her daughter.
LOR. Sciarrha,
Is't true Pisano marries Oriana,
The rich Morosa's daughter?
SCI. Ha!
LOR. We did
Expect to hear your sister should have been
His bride; has he forsaken Amidea?
SCI. Do not you serve Pisano?
PET. Yes, my lord.
SCI. And dare you talk he's to be marriëd
To Oriana?
PET. If they live till to-morrow:
There's great provision, to my knowledge, and—
SCI. Take that, and learn to speak a truth hereafter. [*Strikes him.*
LOR. <That blow shall cost his life.>
It is not possible he dare affront
You thus; the world takes notice of a contract;
He's much to blame if he should wrong so sweet
A lady as Amidea. Now, by Hymen,
'Tis not so honorable: he need not scorn
Such an alliance.
PET. I am not to give

[1] Wait.

Account for my lord's actions; let him answer
And justify his honor: but, my lord,
Since I am provoked, I must declare he has
Called back his vows to Amidea, given
Her freedom, and does mean to use his own;
And this he dares publish.
LOR. What! disclaimed
A lady of her birth and glorious merit?
SCI. Thou art a villain.
LOR. My lord, he is not worth your anger; he
Declares but what his master hath committed;
'Tis none of his fault.
PET. It becomes my duty
To take correctiön, my lord, from you;
I am a servant, a poor gentleman.
SCI. <Shall I suspect the circumstance at his
Departure?>
LOR. It is strange you knew not this
Before.
SCI. I must examine if he dares—
LOR. Be patiënt.
SCI. Teach fools and children patience.
May dogs eat up Sciarrha; let me live
The prodigy of sorrow; die a death
That may draw tears from Scythians, if Pisano
Lead o'er his threshold any soon-won dame,
To be my sister's shame! I am calm now.
One [thus] false, Heaven, why should thy altars save?
'Tis just that Hymen light him to his grave. [*Exit.*
LOR. A thousand Furies swell his rage! although
Pisano bleed, this is the safest killing;
Wise men secure their fates, and execute
Invisibly, like that most subtle flame
That burns the heart, yet leaves no part or touch
Upon the skin to follow or suspect it.—
Farewell, dull, passionate fool! how this doth feed me;
Kill, and be lost thyself; or, if his sword
Conclude thy life, both ways I am revenged.—
Petruchio, thou didst hit my instructions rarely,
And I applaud thee: now send in Depazzi,
And visit me anon.
PET. I shall, my lord. [*Exit.*
LOR. Some politician,
That is not wise but by a precedent,
Would think me weak for using such an instrument
As this Depazzi; but I know by proof,
Such men whom fear and honor make our creatures,
Do prove safe engines; fools will still obey,
When cunning knaves our confidence betray.

Enter DEPAZZI.

DEP. My lord, I would speak a word or two in private.
LOR. You may.
DEP. Is nobody within hearing? all clear behind the arras?
LOR. Make no doubt, sir.
DEP. My lord, the truth is—I am very fearful: is your lordship sure there are no eaves-droppers?
LOR. What needs this circumstance? I pray come to the point.
DEP. 'Tis not unknown to your lordship that you have been my very good lord; neither am I ignorant that I am your humble servant; you advanced me, brought me into the number of the nobles; and I brought you a reasonable number of crowns: I am not the first wise citizen that hath been converted into a foolish courtier; but, my lord, I beseech you pardon me: it will out.
LOR. What's the matter?
DEP. I am ready to burst.
LOR. With what?
DEP. Treason, treason. Now 'tis out, and I feel my body the lighter for it already. The last plot did not take, you see; and I would humbly entreat your lordship to excuse me, and get somebody else hereafter to be your traitor, in my stead.

Lor. How, sir?

Dep. If you did but know the tenderness of my constitution, or feel the pangs and convulsions that I suffer, you would pity me: I fall away, you see; I cannot sleep for dreaming of an axe; I have [400 caused my hangings of Holofernes to be taken down in my dining-room, because I dare not look upon a head that is cut off in it, something of my complexion: my wisdom tells me I am a fool to be so fearful; but my conscience tells me I am a greater fool if I have not wit enough in my pate to keep my head on my shoulders. I beeseech your lordship take me into your consideration; I am but [410 a mortal, though I be a lord; every man hath not the like gift of impudence; I have a weak stomach, and treason is physic to me, and, although I do not vomit up your secrets, they may out some other way.

Lor. You will not betray me?

Dep. But alas! in such a case I may soon bewray myself, and then your lordship may be smelled out: to prevent, [420 therefore, some mischief that may happen, I desire to leave off while I am well; and, that your lordship may know I mean plainly, I have brought you all your letters; I durst not trust any other place with them, for fear of state rats; I have unripped my bosom to you, and there they are to a title. Now I may safely swear [I] have no hand with your lordship. [430

Lor. This is very strange.

Dep. Mistake not, my good lord, I am still your creature; but I have a great mind to be honest a little, while among the weaker sort of nobility; yet thus much persuade yourself: I will never wrong your lordship in a syllable; should you tell me of a thousand treasons and stratagems, I will never reveal any; I scorn that; but your lordship must [440 pardon me, I will be a traitor no longer, that's certain; I will be honest, and the rather because nobody shall hit me in the teeth after I am dead, and say, "Look where Depazzi carries his head very high!" And, my lord, the more to induce your lordship to dismiss me—[*Calling.*] Rogero!

Enter Rogero.

Rog. My lord. [450

Dep. Give me the gold.—I have brought fifteen hundred crowns more.

Lor. Wherefore?

Dep. That I may have your lordship's good will, to leave my office before it be taken from me, and preferred to a worse; 'tis half the price I paid for't. I love peace and a little honesty; I know your honor will find an abler man for it, and it is fit I should pay for my *quietus*. [461

Lor. And what do you resolve?

Dep. To return to the dunghill from whence I came; for, though I was born in the city, I have some land in the country, dirty acres, and mansion-house, where I will be the miracle of a courtier, and keep good hospitality, love my neighbors and their wives, and consequently get their children; be admired amongst [470 the justices, sleep upon every bench, keep a chaplain in my own house to be my idolater and furnish me with jests; and, when I have nothing else to do, I will think of the court, and how much I have been obliged to your lordship. My lord, I may do you service with a leading voice in the country; the kennel will cry on my side if it come to election: you or your friend shall carry it against the commonwealth. [481

Lor. Well, sir, since you have expressed yourself so freely, I will not counsel you against your disposition to stay at court; you may go when and whither you please; and, though at parting I have nothing worth your acceptation, I will bestow these crowns upon your servant.

[*Gives* Rogero *the money.*

Dep., *to* Rogero. <Thou shalt give them me again. [491

Rog. Indeed, my lord, I love a little honesty: 'tis his lordship's bounty, it will be a stock to set me up for myself at court, when your lordship is retired into

the country.> I humbly thank your lordship, and take my leave of yours. [*Exit with the money.*

Enter a SERVANT.

SERV. The duke, my lord. [*Exit* SERVANT. [501

DEP. How! the duke?

Enter the DUKE.

DUKE. Signior Depazzi.

LOR. He has been earnest with me, an't please your highness,
To be his humble suitor he may have
Freedom to leave the court.

DUKE. He shall be banished.

DEP. How? [510

LOR. What time will your grace allow [him] to provide?

DUKE. Two hours.

DEP. I had rather lose my head at home,
And save charges of travel, I beseech your grace.

DUKE. Well, 'tis granted; let him not trouble us.

LOR. Enjoy the country, and return when the duke sends for you. [521

DEP. I humbly thank his highness, and will pray for your increase of grace. [*Exit.*

DUKE. Lorenzo, are we private?

LOR. Yes, my lord.

DUKE. I am very melancholy.

LOR. I know the cause;
'Tis Amidea.

DUKE. Right.

LOR. I do not wish [530
Her dead.

DUKE. It were a sin.

LOR. Not in Heaven, sir;
Yet there be ladies that would think it a promotion.

DUKE. It were a pity she should leave the world,
Till she hath taught [the rest] by her example
The nearest way. [540

LOR. I am very confident
She's yet honest.[2]

DUKE. Yet, Lorenzo?

LOR. Ay, sir;
But I'm not of opiniön it is
Impossible to know a change.

DUKE. Take heed.

LOR. I must confess she has been very valiant
In making you remove your siege, and showed a [551
Pretty dexterity at the poniärd;
Let[3] herself bleed; but this a mortal virgin
Might do, and not be adored for't: other women
Have gone as far, or else false legends have
Been thrust upon the easy world; some say [560
There have been creatures that have killed themselves,
To save their sullen chastities; but I
Have no strong faith that way; yet you were startled
To see her strike her arm, and grew compassionate.

DUKE. I was not marble; we break adamant
With blood; and could I be a man, and not [571
Be moved to see that hasty ebb of life
For my sake?

LOR. I have read some agëd stories:
What think you of Lucrece? she is remembered.

DUKE. Chastity's great example.

LOR. How the world
Was cozened in her? she knew of Tarquin first, [580
And then, suspecting she should never meet
Again the active gentleman, [and] having
Determined of his death, with well dissembled
Sorrow did stab herself, in hope to meet
The gamester in Elysium. Amidea
You will allow beneath this Roman dame?

DUKE. Lorenzo, had the burning ravisher [590
Made this attempt on Amidea, she
Would have compelled his penitence, to quench
His fire with holy tears. I had a body
Refined to air, or I was borne up by

[2] chaste.

[3] Q, See.

A thousand wings: methought I could have flown
And kissed the cheek of Cynthia, thence with ease
Have leaped to Venus' star; but I was wounded,
And the gay feathers, in whose pride I had
My confidence, served now but with their weight
To hasten me to earth.
LOR. Ascend again,
And fix in your loved orb; he brings this comfort
That can assure it, if you have not lost
A heart to entertain with love and pleasure
The beauteous Amidea.
DUKE. Ha!
LOR. You shall enjoy her.
DUKE. Enjoy fair Amidea? do not tempt
Or rather mock my frailty with such promise.
LOR. Shake off your melancholy slumber; I
Have here decreed you shall possess her, she
Be sent submissive to your arms, and you
Be gracious to accept what she made coy of.
DUKE. Is this in nature?
LOR. Thus: Sciarrha's life
And fortunes are already growing forfeit.
These brains have plotted so: your mercy shall
Purchase what you can wish for, in his sister,
And he acknowledge rifling of her honor
A fair and cheap redemptiön.
DUKE. Do this;
And I'll repent the folly of my penitence,
And take thee to my soul, a nearer pledge
Than blood or nature gave me: I'm renewed,
I feel my natural warmth return. When, where
Is this to be expected? I grow old,
While our embraces are deferred.
LOR. I go
To hasten your delight; prepare your blood
For amorous game: Sciarrha's fate is cast
Firmer than destiny.
DUKE. Thou art my prophet,
I'll raise thee up an altar.
LOR. Trust these brains.
DUKE. Thou makest my spirit caper in my veins. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

COSMO *and two* GENTLEMEN *appear at an upper window, overlooking a street.*

1 GENT. This way they pass.
COS. I would not see them.
2 GENT. Why?
1 GENT. What! melancholy o' the sudden? it is now
Past cure.
COS. I know it is, and therefore do not
Desire to witness their solemnity.
Should Oriana see me to-day—
2 GENT. What then?
COS. The object,
I fear, would be too prodigious.
2 GENT. We dispute not
Those nice formalities.

Enter ALONZO, PISANO, ORIANA, *and* MOROSA *in the street below.*

1 GENT. She has spied you already.
COS. I am sorry for't. [ORIANA *faints.* COSMO *and the two* GENTLEMEN *retire.*
MOR. How is't, my child?
PIS. My dearest Oriana!—
She faints!—What grief is so unmannerly
To interrupt thee now? Oriana!
MOR. Daughter!
PIS. Will Heaven divorce us ere the priest have made
Our marriage perfect? we in vain hereafter
Shall hear him teach that our religion binds
To have the church's ceremony. She returns.
ORI. Why were you so unkind to call me from
A pleasing slumber? Death has a fine dwelling.

ALON. This shows her heart's not yet consenting; 'tis
Her mother's fierce command.
ORI. Something spake to me from that window.
PIS. There is nothing.
ORI. Nothing now.
PIS. Set forward.
ALON. I do not like
This interruption; it is ominous.

Enter AMIDEA *hastily.*

AMI. Not for my sake, but for your own, go back,
Or take some other way; this leads to death;
My brother—
PIS. What of him?
AMI. Transported with
The fury of revenge for my dishonor,
As he conceives, for 'tis against my will
Hath vowed to kill you in your nuptial glory.
Alas! I fear his haste; now, good my lord,
Have mercy on yourself; I do not beg
Your pity upon me; I know too well
You cannot love me now, nor would I rob
This virgin of your faith, since you have pleased
To throw me from your love: I do not ask
One smile, nor one poor kiss; enrich this maid,
Created for those blessings; but again
I would beseech you, cherish your own life,
Though I be lost for ever.
ALON. It is worth
Your care, my lord, if there be any danger.
PIS. Alas! her grief hath made her wild, poor lady.
I should not love Oriana, to go back;
Set forward.—Amidea, you may live
To be a happier bride: Sciarrha is not
So irreligious to profane these rites.
AMI. Will you not then believe me?—Pray persuade him;
You are his friends.—Lady, it will concern
You most of all, indeed; I fear you'll weep
To see him dead, as well as I.
PIS. No more;
Go forward.
AMI. I have done; pray be not angry
That still I wish you well: may Heaven divert
All harms that threaten you; full blessings crown
Your marriage! I hope there is no sin in this;
Indeed, I cannot choose but pray for you.
This might have been my wedding-day—
ORI. <Good Heaven,
I would it were! my heart can tell, I take
No joy in being his bride, none in your prayers;
You shall have my consent to have him still;
I will resign my place, and wait on you,
If you will marry him.
AMI. Pray do not mock me;
But, if you do, I can forgive you too.
ORI. Dear Amidea, do not think I mock
Your sorrow; by these tears, that are not worn
By every virgin on her wedding-day,
I am compelled to give away myself:
Your hearts were promised, but he ne'er had mine.
Am not I wretched too?
AMI. Alas, poor maid!
We two keep sorrow alive then; but I prithee,
When thou art married, love him, prithee love him,
For he esteems thee well; and once a day
Give him a kiss for me; but do not tell him
'Twas my desire: perhaps 'twill fetch a sigh
From him, and I had rather break my heart.
But one word more, and Heaven be with you all.>
Since you have led the way, I hope, my lord,
That I am free to marry too?

Pis. Thou art.
Ami. Let me beseech you then, to be so kind,
After your own solemnities are done,
To grace my wedding; I shall be married shortly.
Pis. To whom?
Ami. To one whom you have all heard talk of;
Your fathers knew him well: one who will never
Give cause I should suspect him to forsake me;
A constant lover, one whose lips, though cold,
Distil chaste kisses. Though our bridal bed
Be not adorned with roses, 'twill be green;
We shall have virgin laurel, cypress, yew,
To make us garlands; though no pine do burn,
Our nuptial shall have torches, and our chamber
Shall be cut out of marble, where we'll sleep,
Free from all care for ever: Death, my lord,
I hope, shall be my husband. Now, farewell;
Although no kiss, accept my parting tear,
And give me leave to wear my willow here. [*Exit.*

Enter Sciarrha, *followed at a distance by* Lorenzo, *who is accompanied by a Guard.*

Alon. Sciarrha! then I prophesy—
Sci. Pisano! where's Pisano?
Pis. Here, Sciarrha.
I should have answered with less clamor.
Sci. But
I would not lose my voice; I must be heard,
And't does concern you. I profess no augury,
I have not quartered out the heavens, to take
The flight of birds, nor by inspectiön
Of entrails made a divinatiön;
But I must tell you, 'tis not safe to marry.
Pis. Why?
Sci. 'Twill be fatal; Hymen is gone abroad,
And Venus, lady of your nativity,
Is found, by wise astrologers, this day,
I' the House of Death.
Pis. This must not fright me, sir.—
Set forward.
Sci. One cold word: you are a villain:
I do not flatter.
Pis. I am patiënt:
This day I consecrate to love, not anger;
We'll meet some other time.
Sci. Deride my fury?
Then to thy heart I send my own revenge,
And Amidea's. [*Stabs him.*
Pis. I am murdered.
Mor. Help! murder! gentlemen! oh, my unhappiness! [Lorenzo *and Guard come forward.*
Pis. Bloody Sciarrha! [*Dies. The Guard offer to seize* Sciarrha.
Lor. Hold!
Sci. Come all at once;
Yet let me tell you, my revenge is perfect,
And I would spare your blood, if you despise [not]
My charity—
Lor. No man attempt his death;
I'll give you reasons: this fell deed deserves
An éxemplary justice.
Sci. I am above
Your politic reach, and glory in the wound
That punished our dishonor. Is he dead?
I would not be so miserable, not to have sped him,
For the empire.

Enter Cosmo.

Cos. Oh, my friend! poor Oriana!
Lor., *to the Guard.* Disarm him.—
Return and comfort one another. Some
Remove Pisano's body, while I make it
My care Sciarrha 'scape not. [*Exeunt, bearing the body of* Pisano, *all but* Lorenzo, Sciarrha, *and some of the Guard.*

Sci. None of all
Give me a scratch?
Lor., *to the Guard.* You have forced
him with discretion.
Sci. Now what must I expect?
Lor. You are my prisoner.
Sci. I am so.
Lor. And be confident to find
That favor.—
Sci. Favor!
Lor., *to the Guard.* Be at distance
—more. [*The Guard retire.*
My lord, I am sorry for your great misfortune,
And if you can but study how I may
Assist you, you shall soon discern my love,
My readiness to serve you.
Sci. Ha! this honest?
Lor. I would deserve your faith;
A friend but in affliction justifies
His heart and honor: I durst run some hazard,
Might I secure your fate; name something to me
That may declare my friendship.
Sci. Be still safe,
And teach the world repentance for mistaking thee;
I pity not myself, but envy thy
Heroic honors.
Lor. I will impose no more
Restraint than your own house; you're honorable.
You have many severe enemies; the duke
Looked graciously upon Pisano; but—
Sci. You shall not lose the smallest
beam of favor,
To buy a man so desperate. I never
Thought death the monster that weak men have fancied,
As foil to make us more in love with life.
The devil's picture may affright poor souls
Into their bodies' paleness, but the substance
To resolute man's a shadow; and cold sweat
Dare not approach his forehead. I am armed
To die, and give example of that fortitude
Shall shame the law's severity. My sister
May now give back Pisano his false vows,
To line his coffin: one tear shed on me is
Enough; the justice I have done shall make
My memory beloved.
Lor. I have thought a way
To recover you, if you incline to it;
Dare you consent?
Sci. To any thing that's noble;
Although I never feared to suffer, I
Am not so foolish to despise a life.
Lor. There is no difficulty attends it; listen,
The time will not permit much circumstance:
The duke, you know, did love your sister.
Sci. Viciously.
Lor. Her virtue did but cool him for the present,
As sprinklings on a flame; he's now more passionate
To enjoy her.
Sci. Ha!
Lor. If she consent to meet
His soft embrace, with his first kiss he seals
Your pardon; then the act upon Pisano
Appears a true revenge, when none dares question it.
Beside additiön of state and fortune,
To you and Amidea, weigh your danger,
And what a trifle she gives up, to save
Your life, that never can be valued;
Less, recompensed. The duke may be so taken
With her return to his delight, who knows
But he may marry her, and discharge his duchess
With a quaint salad. You do apprehend me?
Sci. And repent more I had one good thought of thee,
Than I had killed a thousand. Save my life,
And prostitute my sister! Though I have
No weapon, I will look thee dead, or breathe

A damp shall stifle thee. That I could vomit
Consuming flames, or stones, like Etna! make
The earth with motion of my feet shrink lower,
And take thee in alive! Oh, that my voice
Could call a serpent from corrupted Nile,
To make thee part of her accursëd bowels!
Is this [your] noble friendship? readiness
To save my life? let malice read all stories
Famous for cruelty, awake dead tyrants,
Or be instructed by their ghosts with tortures,
Such as will make a damnëd Fury weep
Only to see inflicted, I would bear them,
And weary my tormenters, ere consent
In thought to thy temptation.
LOR. I have done,
And praise your heathen resolutiön
Of death; go, practise immortality,
And tell us, when you can get leave to visit
This world again, what fine things you enjoy
In hell, for thither these rash passions drive thee;
And, ere thy body hath three days inhabited
A melancholy chamber in the earth,
Hung round about with skulls and dead men's bones,
Ere Amidea have told all her tears
Upon thy marble, or the epitaph
Bely thy soul, by saying it is fled
To Heaven, this sister shall be ravished,
Maugre thy dust and heraldry.
SCI. Ha! ravished,
When I am dead? Was't not so? oh, my soul!
I feel it weep within me, and the tears
Soften my flesh. Lorenzo, I repent
My fury.
LOR. I advised you the best way
My wisdom could direct.
SCI. I thank you for't,
You have awaked my reason; I am ashamed
I was no sooner sensible. Does the duke
Affect my sister still, say you?
LOR. Most passionately.
SCI. She shall obey him then, upon my life;
That's it, my life. I know she loves me dearly.
I shall have much ado to win her to't.
But she shall come; I'll send her.
LOR. Perform this.
SCI. I will not only send her, but prepared
Not to be disobedient to his highness;
He shall command her any thing.
LOR. Do this,
And be for ever happy. When these have,
Only for form, but waited on you home,
This disengages them.
SCI. My humblest service
To the duke I pray, and tell him, Amidea
This night shall be at his dispose, by this.
[*Gives* LORENZO *a token of some sort.*
LOR. I'm confident; farewell!—Attend Sciarrha.
[*Exit.*
SCI. Pity the seaman, that, to avoid a shelf,
Must strike upon a rock to save himself.
[*Exit, with Guard.*

ACT FIVE

SCENE I

SCIARRHA, *in one of the rooms of his house, has told* AMIDEA *of his murder of* PISANO.

SCI. The doors are fast;
Enough is wept already for Pisano:
There's something else that must be thought on, and
Of greater consequence: I am yet unsafe,
That, for thy sake, am guilty of his blood.
AMI. Though all my stock of tears were spent already
Upon Pisano's loss, and that my brain

Were banquërupt of moisture, and denied
To lend my grief one drop more for his funeral,
Yet the remembrance that you have made
A forfeit [for my sake] of your dear life
Is able to create a weeping spring
Within my barren head: oh, my lost brother,
Thou hast a cruel destiny! my eyes,
In pity of thy fate, desire to drown thee.
The law will only seek thee upon land;
Hid in my tears, thou shalt prevent the stroke
Kills both our name and thee.

SCI. I know thou lov'st me,
Poor girl. I shall desire to cherish life,
If thou lament me thus: so rich a comfort
Will tempt me wish I might delay my journey
To Heaven.

AMI. Good Heaven, that we might go together!

SCI. That must not be.

AMI. Then let me go before.

SCI. How?

AMI. Make my suit unto the prince my blood
May be your ransom; let me die, Sciarrha;
My life is fruitless unto all the world.
The duke in justice will not deny this;
And, though I weep in telling thee, I shall
Smile on the scaffold.

SCI. How my honor blushes
To hear thee, Amidea! in this love
Thou wound'st me more than thou desir'st to save.
Suffer for me? why, thou art innocent:
I have provoked the punishment, and dare
Obey it manly; if thou could'st redeem me
With anything but death, I think I should
Consent to live, but I'd not have thee venture
All at one chance.

AMI. Nothing can be too precious
To save a brother, such a loving brother
As you have been.

SCI. Death's a devouring gamester
And sweeps up all. What think'st thou of an eye?
Couldst thou spare one, and think the blemish recompensed,
To see me safe with t'other? Or a hand?
This white hand, [Amidea,] that hath so often,
With admiration, trembled on the lute,
Till we have prayed thee leave the strings awhile,
And laid our ears close to thy ivory fingers,
Suspecting all the harmony proceeded
From their own motiön, without the need
Of any dull or passive instrument.
No, Amidea, thou shalt not bear one scar
To buy my life; the sickle shall not touch
A flower that grows so fair upon his stalk;
Thy t'other hand will miss a white companion,
And wither on thy arm: what then can I
Expect from thee to save me? I would live,
And owe my life to thee, so 'twere not bought
Too dear.

AMI. Do you believe I should not find
The way to Heaven? were both mine eyes thy ransom,
I shall climb up those high and rugged cliffs
Without a hand.

SCI. One way there is, if thou
Dost love [me] with that tenderness.

AMI. Pronounce it,
And let no danger that attends incline you
To make a pause.

SCI. The duke, thou know'st, did love thee.

AMI. Ha!

SCI. Nay, do not start already, nor mistake me;
I do not, as before, make trial of thee,

Whether thou canst, laying aside thy honor,
Meet his lascivious arms; but, by this virtue,
I must beseech thee to forego it all,
And turn a sinful woman.
AMI. Bless me!
SCI. I know the kingdoms of the world contain not
Riches enough to tempt thee to a fall
That will so much undo thee; but I am
Thy brother, dying brother; if thou lov'st
Him, therefore, that for thee hath done so much;
Dyed his pale hands in blood, to revenge thee,
And in that murder wounded his own soul
Almost to death, consent to lose thy innocence.
I know it makes thee grieve; but I shall live
To love thee better for it: we'll repent
Together for our sins, and pray and weep
Till Heaven hath pardoned all.
AMI. Oh, never, never.
SCI. Do but repeat thy words, "to save my life,"
And that will teach compassiön; "my life;"
Our shame, the stain of all our family,
Which will succeed in my ignoble death,
Thou washest off.
AMI. But stain myself for ever.
SCI. Where? In thy face, who shall behold one blemish,
Or one spot more in thy whole frame? thy beauty
Will be the very same, thy speech, thy person
Wear no deformity.
AMI. Oh, do not speak.
So like a rebel to all modesty,
To all religion; if these arguments
Spring from your jealousy[1] that I am fallen,
After a proof you did so late applaud—
SCI. I had not killed Pisano then; I am now
More spotted than the marble: then my head
Did own no forfeiture to law;
It does ache now: then I but tried thy virtue;
Now my condition calls for mercy to thee,
Though to thyself thou appear cruel for't:
Come, we may live both, if you please.
AMI. I must never
Buy my poor breath at such a rate. Who has
Made you afraid to die? I pity you,
And wish myself in any noble cause
Your leader. When our souls shall leave this dwelling,
The glory of one fair and virtuous action
Is above all the 'scutcheons on our tomb,
Or silken banners over us.
SCI. So valiant!
I will not interpose another syllable
To entreat your pity; say your prayers, and then
Thou'rt ripe to be translated from the earth,
To make a cherubin.
AMI. What means my brother?
SCI. To kill you.
AMI. Do not fright me, good Sciarrha.
SCI. And I allow three minutes for devotion.
AMI. Will you murder me?
SCI. Do you tremble?
AMI. Not at the terror of your sword,
But at the horror will affright thy soul
For this black deed. I see Pisano's blood
Is texted in thy forehead, and thy hands
Retain too many crimson spots already;
Make not thyself, by murthering of thy sister,
All a red letter.
SCI. You shall be the martyr.[2]
AMI. Yet stay; is there no remedy but death,
And from your hand? then keep your word, and let me
Use one short prayer. [*Kneels.*
SCI. <I shall relent. >

[1] fear.

[2] The allusions here are to the custom, still observed, of printing the names of the martyrs in the Roman Calendar in red letters.—*Gifford.*

AMI. <Forgive me, Heaven, and witness I have still
My virgin thoughts; 'tis not to save my life,
But his eternal one.> [*Rises.*
Sciarrha, give me leave to veil my face:
[*Veils her face.*
I dare not look upon you, and pronounce
I am too much a sister; live; hereafter,
I know, you will condemn my frailty for it.
I will obey the duke.
SCI. Darest thou consent? [*Stabs her.*
AMI., *unveiling.* Oh, let me see the wound;
'Tis well, if any other hand had done it.
Some angel tell my brother now, I did
But seem consenting.
SCI. Ha! "but seem"?
AMI. You may believe my last breath.
SCI. Why didst say so?
AMI. To gain some time, in hope you might call in
Your bloody purpose, and prevent the guilt
Of being my murderer; but Heaven forgive thee.
SCI. Again, again forgive me, Amidea,
And pray for me; live but a little longer,
To hear me speak; my passion hath betrayed
Thee to this wound, for which I know not whether
I should rejoice or weep, since thou art virtuous.
The duke, whose soul is black again, expects thee
To be his whore.—Good Death, be not so hasty.—
The agent for his lust, Lorenzo, has
My oath to send thee to his bed: for otherwise,
In my denial, hell and they decree,
When I am dead, to ravish thee—mark that,
To ravish thee!—and I confess, in tears
As full of sorrow as thy soul of innocence,
In my religious care to have thee spotless,
I did resolve, when I had found thee ripe,
And nearest Heaven, with all thy best desires,
To send thee to thy peace: thy feigned consent
Hath brought thy happiness more early to thee,
And saved some guilt; forgive me altogether.
AMI. With the same heart I beg Heaven for myself;
Farewell. [*Swoons.*
SCI. Thou shalt not die yet. Amidea! sister!— [*Knocking within.*
[*Calling.*] I cannot come:—
But one word more: Oh, which way went thy soul?
Or is it gone so far it cannot hear me?—

FLORIO *breaks open the door and enters.*

Look, here's our sister! so, so; chafe her:
She may return; there is some motion.
FLO. Sister!
SCI. Speak aloud, Florio; if her spirit be not
Departed, I will seal this passage up:
I feel her breath again.—Here's Florio would
Fain take his leave.—So, so, she comes!
FLO. Amidea,
How came this wound?
AMI. I drew the weapon to it:
Heaven knows, my brother loved me: now, I hope,
The duke will not pursue me with new flames.
Sciarrha, tell the rest: love one another
The time you live together; I'll pray for you
In Heaven. Farewell! kiss me when I am dead;
You else will stay my journey. [*Dies.*
SCI. Didst not hear
An angel call her? Florio, I have much
To tell thee: take her up; stay, I will talk
A little more with her; she is not dead;
Let her alone.—Nay then, she's gone indeed;
But hereabouts her soul must hover still.
Let's speak to that fair spirit—
FLO. You talk idly.

Sci. Do you talk wisely then. An excellent pattern,
As she now stands, for her own alabaster;
Or may she not be kept from putrefaction,
And be the very figure on her tomb?
Cannot thy tears and mine preserve her, Florio?
If we want brine, a thousand virgins shall
Weep every day upon her, and themselves,
In winter, leaning round about her monument,
Being moist creatures, stiffen with the cold,
And freeze into so many white supporters.
But we lose time.—I charge thee, by thy love
To this pale relic, be instructed by me,
Not to thy danger; some revenge must be,
And I am lost already; if thou fall,
Who shall survive, to give us funeral?

Scene II

Now that Pisano *is dead,* Petruchio *has become officially what he has long been in reality—the servant of* Lorenzo. *He and his master are together in one of the rooms of* Lorenzo's *palace.*

Lor. Petruchio.
Pet. My lord.
Lor. Thou art now my servant.
Pet. I ever was in heart your humblest vassal.
Lor. Thou art faithful; I must cherish thy desert.
I shortly shall reward it, very shortly:
Next morning must salute me duke: the sun
And I must rise together.
Pet. I shall pray
Your glory may outshine him in your Florence,
And, when he sets, we may enjoy your sunbeam.
Lor. 'Tis handsome flattery, and becomes a courtier.
Pet. I flatter not, my lord.
Lor. Then thou'rt a fool:
No music to a great man chimes so sweetly,
And men must thrive. Come hither; how many hast thou killed?
Pet. But one, my lord.
Lor. But one!
Pet. And I must owe
My life to your lordship; I had been hanged else.
Lor. But one? wait at the door; [*Exit* Petruchio.] He is
Not fit to kill a duke, whose hand is guilty
But of a single murder; or at least
Not fit alone to act it: I have been
Practised already, and, though no man see it,
Nor scarce the eye of Heaven, yet every day
I kill a prince.—Appear, thou tragic witness, [*Brings forth the* Duke's *picture, a poniard sticking in it*
Which, though it bleed not, I may boast a murder.
Here first the duke was painted to the life;
But, with this pencil, to the death: I love
My brain for the inventiön, and, thus
Confirmed, dare trust my resolutiön.
I did suspect his youth and beauty might
Win some compassion when I came to kill him;
Or the remembrance that he is my kinsman
Might thrill my blood; or something in his title
Might give my hand repulse and startle nature:
But thus I have armed myself against all pity,
That, when I come to strike, my poniard may
Through all his charms as confidently wound him
As thus I stab his picture and stare on it. [*Stabs the picture.*
Methinks the duke should feel me now: is not
His soul acquainted? can he less than tremble,

When I lift up my arm to wound his counterfeit?
Witches can persecute the lives of whom
They hate, when they torment their senseless figures [81
And stick the waxen model full of pins.
Can any stroke of mine carry less spell
To wound his heart, sent with as great a malice?
He smiles, he smiles upon me! I will dig
Thy wanton eyes out, and supply the dark
And hollow cells with two pitch-burning tapers; [91
Then place thee porter in some charnel-house,
To light the coffins in.—

Re-enter PETRUCHIO.

PET. My lord.
LOR. The duke's
Not come already?
PET. Signior Florio
Desires to speak with you. [100
LOR. This must retire
Again into my closet. [*Puts back the picture.*] Admit him.

Enter FLORIO.

Welcome! How does Sciarrha?
FLO. He commends
His service to your lordship, and hath sent—
LOR. His sister? [109
FLO. Much ado he had to effect it;
He hopes his grace will quickly sign his pardon.
LOR. It shall be done.
FLO. I have a suit, my lord.
LOR. To me?
FLO. My sister would intreat your honor,
She may be admitted privately, and that
I may have privilege to prepare her chamber: [120
She does retain some modesty, and would not
Trust every servant with her shame; their eyes
Are apt to instruct their tongues.
LOR. . . I will not see her
Myself. Command what you desire.
FLO. You are gracious.
LOR. I'll give directions instantly: poor lady, [130
This is the duke's hot blood; but Heaven convert him!
Follow me, good Florio.
FLO. I attend, my lord.
LOR. Things shall be carried honorably.
FLO. We are all bound to you. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

Two GENTLEWOMEN *have laid out the body of* AMIDEA *upon a bed in another room in* LORENZO'S *palace. Recorders*[3] *sound.*

1 GENT. This is a sad employment.
2 GENT. The last we e'er shall do my lady.

Enter FLORIO.

FLO. So; now you may return: it will become [10
Your modest duties not to enquire the reason
Of this strange service, nor to publish what
You have been commanded.—[*Exeunt* GENTLEWOMEN.] Let me look upon
My sister now; still she retains her beauty;
Death has been kind to leave her all this sweetness. [20
Thus in a morning have I oft saluted
My sister in her chamber, sat upon
Her bed, and talked of many harmless passages;
But now 'tis night, and a long night with her:
I ne'er shall see these curtains drawn again,
Until we meet in Heaven.—The duke already! [30

Enter DUKE *and* LORENZO.

DUKE. May I believe?
LOR. Trust me, my lord, hereafter.
DUKE. Call me no more thy lord, but thy companion;
I will not wear that honor in my title

[3] flageolets.

Shall not be thine.—Who's that?
LOR. Her brother Florio.
DUKE. She is abed?
LOR. The readier for your pastime:
She means to make a night on't. [41
FLO., *pretending to talk to* AMIDEA.
This shall declare thee to posterity
The best of sisters.—What of that? and is not
A brother's life more precious than a trifle?
I prithee do not sigh: how many ladies
Would be ambitious of thy place to-night,
And thank his highness? yes, and virgins too. [51
DUKE. He pleads for me.
LOR. He will deserve some office 'bout your person.
DUKE. With what words shall I express my joy?
LOR. I leave you, sir, to action; Florio
Is soon dismissed. [*Exit.*
FLO. He's come: good night—
DUKE. Florio! [60
FLO., *coming forward.* Your slave.
DUKE. My friend!
Thou shalt be near our bosom.
FLO. Pleasures crown
Your expectation! [*Exit.*
DUKE. All perfect; till this minute, I could never
Boast I was happy: all this world has not
A blessing to exchange: this world! 'tis Heaven; [71
And thus I take possession of my saint:
[*Goes up to the bed.*
Asleep already? 'twere great pity to
Disturb her dream, yet, if her soul be not
Tired with the body's weight, it must convey
Into her slumbers I wait here and thus
Seal my devotiön. [*Kisses the corpse.*]—
What winter dwells [80
Upon this lip! 'twas no warm kiss; I'll try
Again. [*Kisses it again.*] The snow is not so cold; I have
Drunk ice, and feel a numbness spread through [4]

[4] Should, perhaps, be "through all."

My blood at once.—Ha! let me examine
A little better.—Amidea!—She is dead, she is dead!
What horror doth invade me?—[*Calling.*] Help, Lorenzo! [91
Murder! where is Lorenzo?

Re-enter LORENZO, *with* PETRUCHIO.

LOR. Here, my lord.
DUKE. Some traitor's hid within the chamber; see,
My Amidea's dead!
LOR. Dead! 'tis impossible,
[*Goes up to the bed.* [99
Yet she has a wound upon her breast.
DUKE. I prithee kill me: [*They stab him.*
Ha! wilt thou murder me, Lorenzo?—[*To* PETRUCHIO.] Villain!—
Oh, spare me to consider; I would live
A little longer: treason!
LOR. A little longer, say you?
It was my duty to obey you, sir.
PET. Let's make him sure, my lord.
LOR. What would you say?— [110
[*To* PETRUCHIO.] No ears but ours can reach his voice.—[*To the* DUKE.] But be
Not tedious.
DUKE. Oh, spare me; I may live, and pardon thee:
Thy prince begs mercy from thee, that did never
Deny thee any thing; pity my poor soul;
I have not prayed. [120
LOR. I could have wished you better
Prepared, but let your soul e'en take his chance. [*Stabs him again.*
DUKE. No tears prevail! oh, whither must [I] wander?
Thus Cæsar fell by Brutus. I shall tell
News to the world I go to will not be
Believed: Lorenzo killed me.
LOR. Will it not?
I'll presently put in security. [*Stabs him again.* [131
DUKE. I am coming, Amidea, I am coming.—
For thee, inhuman murderer, expect
My blood shall fly to Heaven, and there, inflamed,

Hang a prodigious meteor all thy life;
And, when by some as bloody hand as thine
Thy soul is ebbing forth, it shall descend
In flaming drops upon thee. Oh, I faint!—
Thou flattering world, farewell! let princes gather
My dust into a glass, and learn to spend
Their hour of state, that's all they have; for, when
That's out, Time never turns the glass again. [*Dies.*

LOR. So! Lay him beside his mistress; hide their faces.
The duke dismissed the train came with him?

PET. He did, my lord.

LOR. Run to Sciarrha, pray him come and speak with me;
Secure his passage to this chamber: haste!— [*Exit* PETRUCHIO.
He's dead; I'll trust him now, and his ghost too;
Fools start at shadows; I'm in love with night
And her complexiön.

Re-enter PETRUCHIO.

PET. My lord, he's come
Without your summons.

LOR. Already? leave us. [*Exit* PETRUCHIO.

Enter SCIARRHA *and* FLORIO.

Welcome, let embraces
Chain us together.—Noble Florio, welcome.—
But I must honor thy great soul.

SCI. Where's the duke?

LOR. They are abed together.

SCI. Ha!

LOR. He's not stirring yet:
Thou kill'dst thy sister, didst not?

SCI. I preserved her.

LOR. So! it was bravely done.

SCI. But where's the wanton duke?

LOR. Asleep, I tell you.

SCI. And he shall sleep eternally.

LOR. You cannot wake him; look you. [*Leads* SCIARRHA *up to the bed.*

SCI. Is he dead?

LOR. And in his death we two begin our life
Of greatness and of empire; nay, he's dead.

SCI. That labor's saved.

LOR. Now I pronounce, Sciarrha,
Thy pardon, and, to recompense thy loss,
The share of Florence; I'll but wear the title;
The power we'll divide.

SCI. I like this well:
You told a tale once of a commonwealth
And liberty.

LOR. It was to gain a faction
With discontented persons, a fine trick
To make a buzz of reformatiön.
My ends are compassed; hang the ribble rabble!

SCI. Shall we sweat for the people? lose our breath
To get their fame?

LOR. I'll have it given out
The duke did kill thy sister.

SCI. Excellent!

LOR. Having first ravished her: he cannot be
Too hateful; it will dull the examination
Of his own death; or, if that come to question—

SCI. What if I say, I killed him in revenge
Of Amidea? they will pity me;
Beside, it will be in your power to pardon
Me altogether.

LOR. Most discreetly thought on.

SCI. The devil will not leave us o' the sudden.

LOR. Rare wit!
<How hastily he climbs the precipice,
From whence one fillip topples him to ruin.>
We two shall live like brothers.

SCI. Stay; we two?
Now I consider better, I have no mind
To live at all; and you shall not—
I'll give you proof; if you but make a noise,
You gallop to the devil.

LOR. I'm betrayed.

Sci. To death inevitable.—Brother, be you
Spectator only.
Lor. This is somewhat noble.
Sci. Thank me not, Lorenzo; I will not engage [241
His innocence to blood.—Thy hands are white;
Preserve them, Florio, and, unless my arm
Grow feeble, do not interpose thy sword,
I charge thee.
Lor. None to assist me?—[*Calling.*] Help, Petruchio! help! [*They fight.* [250

Enter Petruchio, *and offers to run at* Sciarrha, *but is intercepted by* Florio. *He runs out, crying* "Help!" Florio *makes fast the door.*

Stretch thy jaws wider, villain! cry out "Murder!
Treason!" anything; hold—oh!
Sci. Will you not fall, colossus?—[Lorenzo *falls, and dies.*
Flo. Are not you hurt? [260
Sci. I know not. Ha! yes, he has pricked me somewhere;
But I'll make sure of him. [*Stabs him again.*] Now must I follow:
I'll fight with him in the t'other world. Thy hand,
Florio; farewell. [*Dies.*
Flo. He's dead too! 'tis in vain for me to fly. [269
Voices, *within.* Break ope the doors!
Flo. You shall not need. [*Opens the door.*

Re-enter Petruchio, *with* Cosmo, Alonzo, Frederico, *and Guard.*

Alon. Disarm him.
Cos. Lorenzo and Sciarrha slain?
Alon. Where is the duke?
Pet. Look here, my lords.
Alon. What traitor?
Fred. See, Amidea murdered too. [280
Cos. I tremble; here is a heap of tragedies.
Alon. We must have an account from Florio.
Flo. He can inform you best that brought you hither.
Alon. Lay hands upon Petruchio! disarm him!
Cos. What blood is that upon his sword? 'tis fresh. [290
Pet. I'm caught.
Cos. To tortures with him.
Pet. Spare your fury; know
'Twas the best blood in Florence: I must quit[5]
Young Florio; Lorenzo and myself
Are only guilty of the prince's death.
Alon. Inhuman traitors!
Cos. But who killed Amidea?
Flo. The duke's lust: [300
There was no other way to save her honor;
My brother has revenged it here, but fate
Denied him triumph.
Alon. I [have] never heard
Such killing stories; but 'tis meet we first
Settle the state.—Cosmo, you are the next
Of blood to challenge Florence.
Cos. Pray defer [310
That till the morning. Drag that murderer
To prison.—Florio, you must not expect
Your liberty, till all things be examined.—
Lorenzo, now I am above thy malice,
And will make satisfaction to Oriana.—
'Tis a sad night, my lords; by these you see
There is no stay in proud mortality.

[5] acquit.

THE BROKEN HEART

BY

JOHN FORD

INTRODUCTION

The title of Ford's masterpiece might very well be, not "The Broken Heart," but "The Broken Hearts," since it presents us with as many as four, constituting, in fact, a perfect orgy of sorrow. The skill shown in the construction of the play is remarkable; but the incidents are exceedingly improbable. The characterization is never very clear, and in one or two cases is contemptible. Penthea is meant to be entirely admirable; but she shows a very vindictive spirit in III 2, though later in the same scene she manages to overcome it. Orgilus is more than vindictive: he is implacable, and, besides, treacherous in the extreme: yet one cannot help realizing that he is expected to arouse sympathy. It is hard to resist the feeling that Ithocles' trust in this creature would be difficult to credit in any circumstances, and is wholly incredible in the circumstances of the poet's imagining.

The reader will proceed three-fourths of the way through the play before he will perceive its title to greatness. He will then have left behind the weak attempts at comedy that mar I 2 and I 3, and will begin to find the gloom in which all the rest of the play is steeped shot through with gleams of exquisite poetry and deep pathos. Its real merit lies in the intensity of its finest scenes and the beauty of individual lines. The intensity culminates in the incredible catastrophe, which it is safe to say no one but Ford could have written. Wisely has he laid his scene in Sparta; for the qualities his heroine displays are such as are associated with the legends of Spartan heroism. (For the first three acts, by the way, it might be supposed that the heroine is Penthea; but we realize later that it is Calantha.) The culminating scene in which, while she is engaged in a ceremonial dance, she receives word of the death of her father, and then of the sister of her betrothed, and then of her betrothed himself, and goes on dancing to the finish, has been ardently admired and roundly abused. It is easy to understand both the admiration and the disapproval. The author makes it clear to us that her action is not due to callousness, for, afterwards, she surrenders herself to death in consequence, committing what may be described as a suicide by will. But, whether we regard that incident as credible or incredible, there can be no question about its extraordinary intensity. Ford has displayed there the whole of his power to

make his reader (or his audience) realize the depth of human suffering by refraining from making the slightest display of it.

The play was published in 1633, and its production may be dated with something like certainty 1631, since it both contains a reference to a work published in that year and is alluded to in another as having been in existence a couple of years before 1633. Whether it is all of one date may not be quite so sure. Neither the oath in I 1 nor the final dialogue in I 2 leads anywhere, and the arrangement as to letters in I 3 also serves no purpose. These may be indications of revision or of a change of intention on the part of the author during the writing of the play. The prologue hints that the story is founded on fact, and Professor Sherman has shown reasons for believing that it is the experience of Penelope Devereux, Sir Philip Sidney's "Stella," that forms the basis of the drama, though the catastrophe is the dramatist's invention.

CHARACTERS

AMYCLAS, *King of Laconia.*
ITHOCLES, *a Favorite.*
ORGILUS, *son to Crotolon.*
BASSANES,[1] *a jealous Nobleman.*
ARMOSTES, *a Councillor of State.*
CROTOLON, *another Councillor.*
PROPHILUS, *Friend to Ithocles.*
NEARCHUS, *Prince of Argos.*
TECNICUS, *a Philosopher.*
HEMOPHIL, GRONEAS } *Courtiers.*
AMELUS, *Friend to Nearchus.*

PHULAS, *Servant to Bassanes.*
CALANTHA, *the King's Daughter.*
PENTHEA, *Sister to Ithocles, and Wife to Bassanes.*
EUPHRANEA, *Maid of honor, Daughter to Crotolon.*
CHRISTALLA, PHILEMA[1] } *Maids of honor.*
GRAUSIS,[2] *Overseer of Penthea.*
Lords, Courtiers, Officers, Attendants, etc.

[1] accented on the first syllable throughout.
[2] B, *Gransis,* throughout.

PLACE: *Sparta.*
TIME: 1st *Millenium, B. C.*

THE BROKEN HEART

PROLOGUE

Our scene is Sparta. He whose best of art
Hath drawn this piece calls it "The Broken Heart."
The title lends no expectation here
Of apish laughter, or of some lame jeer
At place or persons; no pretended clause
Of jests fit for a brothel court's applause
From vulgar admiration: such low songs,
Tuned to unchaste ears, suit not modest tongues.
The Virgin Sisters then deserved fresh bays
When Innocence and Sweetness crowned their lays;
Then vices gasped for breath, whose whole commérce
Was whipped to exile by unblushing verse.
This law we keep in our presentment now,
Not to take freedom more than we allow;
What may be here thought fiction,[1] when time's youth
Wanted some riper years, was known a truth;
In which, if words have clothed the subject right,
You may partake a pity with delight.

ACT ONE

Scene I

Orgilus *nourishes a bitter hatred of* Ithocles, *who has forced his sister,* Penthea *to repudiate her betrothal to* Orgilus *and marry* Bassanes. *In a room in his father's house, he is telling* Crotolon *of his intention of going to Athens.*

Crot. Dally not further; I will know the reason
That speeds thee to this journey.
Org. Reason! good sir, I can yield many.
Crot. Give me one, a good one; Such I expect, and, ere we part, must have.
Athens! Pray, why to Athens? You intend not
To kick against the world, turn cynic, stoic,
Or read the logic lecture, or become
An Areopagite,[2] and judge in cases
Touching the commonwealth; for, as I take it,
The budding of your chin cannot prognosticate
So grave an honor.
Org. All this I acknowledge.
Crot. You do! Then, son, if books and love of knowledge
Inflame you to this travel, here in Sparta
You may as freely study.
Org. 'Tis not that, sir.
Crot. "Not that, sir"! As a father, I command thee
To acquaint me with the truth.
Org. Thus I obey ye:
After so many quarrels as dissension,
Fury, and rage had broached in blood, and sometimes
With death to such confederates as sided
With now-dead Thrasus and yourself, my lord,
Our present king, Amyclas, reconciled
Your eager swords and sealed a gentle peace.

[1] B, *a fiction.*
[2] a member of the highest judicial body.

Friends you professed yourselves; which to confirm,
A resolution for a lasting league
Betwixt your families was entertained
By joining in a Hymenean bond
Me and the fair Penthea, only daughter
To Thrasus. [51
CROT. What of this?
ORG. Much, much, dear sir.
A freedom of converse, an interchange
Of holy and chaste love, so fixed our souls
In a firm growth of union, that no time
Can eat into the pledge: we had enjoyed
The sweets our vows expected, had not cruelty [61
Prevented all those triumphs we prepared for,
By Thrasus his untimely death.
CROT. Most certain.
ORG. From this time sprouted up that poisonous stalk
Of aconite, whose ripened fruit hath ravished [69
All health, all comfort of a happy life;
For Ithocles, her brother, proud of youth,
And prouder in his power, nourished closely
The memory of former discontents,
To glory in revenge. By cunning partly,
Partly by threats, 'a woos at once and forces
His virtuous sister to admit a marriage
With Bassanes, a nobleman, in honor
And riches, I confess, beyond my fortunes. [81
CROT. All this is no sound reason to impórtune
My leave for thy departure.
ORG. Now it follows:
Beauteous Penthea, wedded to this torture
By an insulting brother, being secretly
Compelled to yield her virgin freedom up
To him who never can usurp her heart, [90
Before contracted mine, is now so yoked
To a most barbarous thraldrom, misery,
Affliction, that he savors not humanity
Whose sorrow melts not into more than pity
In hearing but her name.
CROT. As how, pray?
ORG. Bassanes,
The man that calls her wife, considers truly [100
What heaven of perfections he is lord of
By thinking fair Penthea his: this thought
Begets a kind of monster-love, which love
Is nurse unto a fear so strong and servile
As brands all dotage with a jealousy.
All eyes who gaze upon that shrine of beauty
He doth resolve do homage to the miracle; [110
Some one, he is assured, may now or then,
If opportunity but sort, prevail.
So much, out of a self-unworthiness,
His fears transport him; not that he finds cause
In her obedience, but his own distrust.
CROT. You spin out your discourse.
ORG. My griefs are violent;
For, knowing how the maid was heretofore [120
Courted by me, his jealousies grow wild
That I should steal again into her favors,
And undermine her virtues; which the gods
Know I nor dare nor dream of. Hence, from hence
I undertake a voluntary exile;
First, by my absence to take off the cares
Of jealous Bassanes; but chiefly, sir, [129
To free Penthea from a hell on earth;
Lastly, to lose the memory of something
Her presence makes to live in me afresh.
CROT. Enough, my Orgilus, enough. To Athens:
I give a full consent. Alas, good lady!
We shall hear from thee often?
ORG. Often.
CROT. See,
Thy sister comes to give a farewell.

Enter EUPHRANEA. [140

EUPH. Brother!
ORG. Euphranea, thus upon thy cheeks I print
A brother's kiss; more careful of thine honor,

Thy health, and thy well-doing, than my life.
Before we part, in presence of our father,
I must prefer a suit t'ye.
EUPH. You may style it,
My brother, a command.
ORG. That you will promise
To pass never to any man, however
Worthy, your faith, till, with our father's leave,
I give a free consent.
CROT. An easy motion!
I'll promise for her, Orgilus.
ORG. Your pardon;
Euphranea's oath must yield me satisfaction.
EUPH. By Vesta's sacred fires I swear.
CROT. And I,
By Great Apollo's beams, join in the vow,
Not without thy allowance to bestow her
On any living.
ORG. Dear Euphranea,
Mistake me not: far, far 'tis from my thought,
As far from any wish of mine, to hinder
Preferment to an honorable bed
Or fitting fortune; thou art young and handsome;
And 'twere injustice—more, a tyranny—
Not to advance thy merit. Trust me, sister,
It shall be my first care to see thee matched
As may become thy choice and our contents.
I have your oath.
EUPH. You have. But mean you, brother,
To leave us, as you say?
CROT. Ay, ay, Euphranea;
He has just grounds direct him. I will prove
A father and a brother to thee.
EUPH. Heaven
Does look into the secrets of all hearts:
Gods, you have mercy with ye, else—
CROT. Doubt nothing;
Thy brother will return in safety to us.
ORG. Souls sunk in sorrows never are without 'em;
They change fresh airs, but bear their griefs about 'em.

SCENE II

We are in a chamber in the royal palace. The infirm old KING *is awaiting the return of his general,* ITHOCLES, *who has conquered Messenia. With him are* ARMOSTES, PROPHILUS, *and others.*

AMY. The Spartan gods are gracious; our humility
Shall bend before their altars, and perfume
Their temples with abundant sacrifice.
See, lords, Amyclas, your old king, is entering
Into his youth again! I shall shake off
This silver badge of age, and change this snow
For hairs as gay as are Apollo's locks;
Our heart leaps in new vigor.
ARM. May old time
Run back to double your long life, great sir!
AMY. It will, it must, Armostes: thy bold nephew,
Death-braving Ithocles, brings to our gates
Triumphs and peace upon his conquering sword.
Laconia is a monarchy at length;
Hath in this latter war trod under foot
Messene's pride; Messene bows her neck
To Lacedæmon's royalty. O, 'twas
A glorious victory, and doth deserve
More than a chronicle—a temple, lords,
A temple to the name of Ithocles.—
Where didst thou leave him, Prophilus?
PRO. At Pephon,
Most gracious sovereign; twenty of the noblest
Of the Messenians there attend your pleasure,
For such conditions as you shall propose
In settling peace and liberty of life.
AMY. When comes your friend, the general?
PRO. He promised
To follow with all speed convenient.

CALANTHA *and* EUPHRANEA *come in with* CROTOLON. CHRISTALLA *and* PHILEMA *also enter, bearing a garland.*

AMY. Our daughter!—Dear Calantha, the happy news,
The conquest of Messene, hath already
Enriched thy knowledge.
CAL. With the circumstance
And manner of the fight, related faithfully
By Prophilus himself.—But pray, sir, tell me
How doth the youthful general demean
His actions in these fortunes?
PRO. Excellent princess,
Your own fair eyes may soon report a truth
Unto your judgment, with what moderation,
Calmness of nature, measure, bounds, and limits
Of thankfulness and joy, 'a doth digest
Such amplitude of his success as would
In others, moulded of a spirit less clear,
Advance 'em to comparison with heaven:
But Ithocles—
CAL. Your friend—
PRO. He is so, madam,
In which the period of my fate consists:
He, in this firmament of honor, stands
Like a star fixed, not moved with any thunder
Of popular applause or sudden lightning
Of self-opinion; he hath served his country,
And thinks 'twas but his duty.
CROT. You describe
A miracle of man.
AMY. Such, Crotolon,
On forfeit of a king's word, thou wilt find him.—[*A flourish of trumpets is heard.*
Hark, warning of his coming! All attend him.

The Lords present hasten to do the KING'S *bidding, and usher in* ITHOCLES, *who is followed by* HEMOPHIL *and* GRONEAS.

Return into these arms, thy home, thy sanctuary,
Delight of Sparta, treasure of my bosom,
Mine own, own Ithocles!
ITH. Your humblest subject.
ARM. Proud of the blood I claim an interest in,
As brother to thy mother, I embrace thee,
Right noble nephew.
ITH. Sir, your love's too partial.
CROT. Our country speaks by me, who, by thy valor,
Wisdom, and service, shares in this great action,
Returning thee, in part of thy due merits,
A general welcome.
ITH. You exceed in bounty.
CAL. Christalla, Philema, the chaplet. [*Takes the chaplet from them.*]—Ithocles,
Upon the wings of Fame the singular
And chosen fortune of an high attempt
Is borne so past the view of common sight
That I myself with mine own hands have wrought,
To crown thy temples, this provincial garland:
Accept, wear, and enjoy it as our gift
Deserved, not purchased.
ITH. Y'are a royal maid.
AMY. She is in all our daughter.
ITH. Let me blush,
Acknowledging how poorly I have served,
What nothings I have done, compared with th' honors
Heaped on the issue of a willing mind.
In that lay mine ability, that only;
For who is he so sluggish from his birth,
So little worthy of a name or country,
That owes not out of gratitude for life
A debt of service, in what kind soever
Safety or counsel of the commonwealth
Requires, for payment?
CAL. 'A speaks truth.
ITH. Whom heaven
Is pleased to style victorious, there to such
Applause runs madding, like the drunken priests
In Bacchus' sacrifices, without reason,
Voicing the leader-on a demi-god;

Whenas, indeed, each common soldier's blood
Drops down as current coin in that hard purchase
As his whose much more delicate condition [151
Hath sucked the milk of ease: judgment commands,
But resolution executes. I use not,
Before this royal presence, these fit slights
As in contempt of such as can direct:
My speech hath other end; not to attribute
All praise to one man's fortune, which is strengthened [161
By many hands. For instance, here is Prophilus,
A gentleman—I cannot flatter truth—
Of much desert; and, though in other rank,
Both Hemophil and Groneas were not missing
To wish their country's peace; for, in a word, [170
All there did strive their best, and 'twas our duty.

AMY. Courtiers turn soldiers!—We vouchsafe our hand. [HEMOPHIL *and* GRONEAS *kiss his hand.*

Observe your great example.

HEM. With all diligence.

GRON. Obsequiously and hourly.

AMY. Some repose
After these toils is[3] needful. We must think on [181
Conditions for the conquered; they expect[4] 'em.
Oh!—Come, my Ithocles. [*The* KING *departs, with* ITHOCLES, *the others following. As* EUPHRANEA *is going,* PROPHILUS *offers her an arm.*

EUPH. Sir, with your favor,
I need not a supporter.

PRO. Fate instructs me. [190

[*Only four are left,* HEMOPHIL *staying* CHRISTALLA, *and* GRONEAS *staying* PHILEMA.

CHRIS. With me?

PHIL. Indeed, I dare not stay.

HEM. Sweet lady,
Soldiers are blunt: your lip.

CHRIS. Fie, this is rudeness:
You went not hence such creatures.

GRO. Spirit of valor [200
Is of a mounting nature.

PHIL. It appears so.—
Pray, in earnest, how many men apiece
Have you two been the death of?

GRO. 'Faith, not many;
We were composed of mercy.

HEM. For our daring,
You heard the general's approbatiön
Before the king.

CHRIS. You "wished your country's peace;" [211
That showed your charity: where are your spoils,
Such as the soldier fights for?

PHIL. They are coming.

CHRIS. By the next carrier, are they not?

GRO. Sweet Philema,
When I was in the thickest of mine enemies, [220
Slashing off one man's head, another's nose,
Another's arms and legs,—

PHIL. And all together.

GRO. Then would I with a sigh remember thee,
And cry, "Dear Philema, 'tis for thy sake
I do these deeds of wonder!" Dost not love me [230
With all thy heart now?

PHIL. Now as heretofore.
I have not put my love to use; the principal
Will hardly yield an interest.

GRO. By Mars,
I'll marry thee!

PHIL. By Vulcan, you're forsworn,
Except my mind do alter strangely.

GRO. One word. [240

CHRIS., *in answer to something* HEMOPHIL *has said.* You lie beyond all modesty: forbear me.

HEM. I'll make thee mistress of a city; 'tis
Mine own by conquest.

[3] B, are. [4] await.

CHRIS. By petition; sue for't
In forma pauperis.—"City!" kennel.—
Gallants; [251
Off with your feathers, put on aprons, gallants;
Learn to reel, thrum,[5] or trim a lady's dog,
And be good quiet souls of peace, hobgoblins!
HEM. Christalla!
CHRIS. Practise to drill hogs, in hope
To share in the acorns.—Soldiers! corncutters,
But not so valiant; they ofttimes [260
draw blood,
Which you durst never do. When you have practised
More wit or more civility, we'll rank ye
I' th' list of men: till then, brave things-at-arms,
Dare not to speak to us,—most potent Groneas!—
PHIL. And Hemophil the hardy!—at your services. [*Exeunt* CHRISTALLA *and* PHILEMA. [271
GRO. They scorn us as they did before we went.
HEM. Hang 'em! let us scorn them, and be revenged.
GRO. Shall we?
HEM. We will: and, when we slight them thus,
Instead of following them, they'll follow us; [280
It is a woman's nature.
GRO. 'Tis a scurvy one.

SCENE III

ORGILUS *has deceived his father about going to Athens. He has disguised himself as a scholar and betaken himself to a grove in the grounds of the palace, where* TECNICUS, *a philosopher, is, by favor of the* KING, *permitted to wander contemplatively. He makes no attempt to deceive* TECNICUS *as to his identity, aiming at securing his help; but he does not reveal his purpose, which is to keep a close watch on* EUPHRANEA *and to obtain news of* PENTHEA. [12

TEC. Tempt not the stars; young man, thou canst not play
With the severity of fate: this change
Of habit and disguise in outward view
Hides not the secrets of thy soul within thee
From their quick-piercing eyes which dive at all times [20
Down to thy thoughts: in thy aspéct I note
A consequence of danger.
ORG. Give me leave,
Grave Tecnicus, without foredooming destiny,
Under thy roof to ease my silent griefs,
By applying to my hidden wounds the balm [29
Of thy oraculous lectures. If my fortune
Run such a crooked by-way as to wrest
My steps to ruin, yet thy learned precepts
Shall call me back and set my footings straight.
I will not court the world.
TEC. Ah, Orgilus,
Neglects in young men of delights and life [39
Run often to extremities; they care not
For harms to others who contemn their own.
ORG. But I, most learned artist, am not so much
At odds with nature that I grudge the thrift
Of any true deserver; nor doth malice
Of present hopes so check them with despair
As that I yield to thought of more affliction [51
Than what is incident to frailty: wherefore
Impute not this retirèd course of living
Some little time to any other cause
Than what I justly render—the information
Of an unsettled mind; as the effect
Must clearly witness.
TEC. Spirit of truth inspire thee! [60
On these conditions I conceal thy change,
And willingly admit thee for an auditor.—
I'll to my study.

[5] weave.

ORG. I to contemplations
In these delightful walks.—[*Exit* TECNICUS.
Thus metamorphosed
I may without suspicion hearken after
Penthea's usage and Euphranea's faith.—
Love, thou art full of mystery! The deities
Themselves are not secure[6] in searching out
The secrets of those flames, which, hidden, waste
A breast made tributary to the laws
Of beauty: physic yet hath never found
A remedy to cure a lover's wound.—
Ha! who are those that cross yon private walk
Into the shadowing grove in amorous foldings?

PROPHILUS *and* EUPHRANEA *pass by, close in whispered conversation. His arm is about her waist.*

My sister! O, my sister! 'tis Euphranea
With Prophilus: supported too! I would
It were an apparition! Prophilus
Is Ithocles his friend: it strangely puzzles me.
Again! help me, my book; this scholar's habit
Must stand my privilege: my mind is busy,
Mine eyes and ears are open. [*Seeing the pair approaching again, he pretends to become deeply immersed in a book he is carrying.*

PROPHILUS *and* EUPHRANEA *re-enter.*

PRO. Do not waste
The span of this stol'n time, lent by the gods
For precious use, in niceness.[7] Bright Euphranea,
Should I repeat old vows, or study new,
For purchase of belief to my desires—
ORG. <"Desires"!>
PRO. My service, my integrity—
ORG. <That's better.>
PRO. I should but repeat a lesson
Oft conned without a prompter but thine eyes.
My love is honorable.
ORG. <So was mine
To my Penthea, chastely honorable.>
PRO. Nor wants there more addition to my wish
Of happiness than having thee a wife;
Already sure of Ithocles, a friend
Firm and unalterable.
ORG. <But a brother
More cruel than the grave.>
EUPH. What can you look for,
In answer to your noble protestations,
From an unskilful maid, but language suited
To a divided mind?
ORG. <Hold out, Euphranea!>
EUPH. Know, Prophilus, I never undervalued,
From the first time you mentioned worthy love,
Your merit, means, or person: it had been
A fault of judgment in me, and a dulness
In my affections, not to weigh and thank
My better stars, that offered me the grace
Of so much blissfulness. For, to speak truth,
The law of my desires kept equal pace
With yours; nor have I left that resolution:
But only, in a word, whatever choice
Lives nearest in my heart must first procure
Consent both from my father and my brother,
Ere he can own me his.
ORG. <She is forsworn else.>
PRO. Leave me that task.
EUPH. My brother, ere he parted
To Athens, had my oath.
ORG. <Yes, yes, 'a had, sure.>
PRO. I doubt not, with the means the court supplies,
But to prevail at pleasure.
ORG., *ironically*. <Very likely!>
PRO. Meantime, best, dearest, I may build my hopes.
On the foundation of thy constant sufferance
In any opposition.

[6] certain. [7] coyness.

EUPH. Death shall sooner
Divorce life and the joys I have in living
Than my chaste vows from truth.
PRO. On thy fair hand
I seal the like.
ORG. <There is no faith in woman.
Passion, O, be contained! My very heart-strings.
Are on the tenters.>
EUPH. Sir, we are overheard.
Cupid protect us! 'Twas a stirring, sir,
Of some one near.
PRO. Your fears are needless, lady;
None have access into these private pleasures
Except some near in court, or bosom-student
From Tecnicus his oratory, granted
By special favor lately from the king
Unto the grave philosopher.
EUPH. Methinks
I hear one talking to himself. I see him.
PRO. 'Tis a poor scholar, as I told you, lady.
ORG. <I am discovered.> [*Half aloud, to himself, as if studying.*] Say it; is it possible,
With a smooth tongue, a leering countenance,
Flattery, or force of reason—I come t'ye, sir—
To turn or to appease the raging sea?
Answer to that.—Your art! what art to catch
And hold fast in a net the sun's small atoms?
No, no; they'll out, they'll out: ye may as easily
Outrun a cloud driven by a northern blast
As fiddle-faddle so. Peace, or speak sense!
EUPH. Call you this thing a scholar? 'Las, he's lunatic.
PRO. Observe him, sweet; 'tis but his recreation.
ORG. But will you hear a little? You're so tetchy,
You keep no rule in argument. Philosophy
Works not upon impossibilities,
But natural conclusions.—Mew! absurd!
The metaphysics are but speculations
Of the celestial bodies, or such accidents
As, not mixed perfectly, in the air engendered,
Appear to us unnatural; that's all.
Prove it; yet, with a reverence to your gravity,
I'll balk illiterate sauciness, submitting
My sole opinion to the touch of writers.
PRO. Now let us fall in with him. [*They come forward.*
ORG. Ha, ha, ha!
These apish boys, when they but taste the grammates[8]
And principles of theory, imagine
They can oppose their teachers. Confidence
Leads many into errors.
PRO. By your leave, sir.
EUPH. Are you a scholar, friend?
ORG. I am, gay creature,
With pardon of your deities, a mushroom
On whom the dew of heaven drops now and then;
The sun shines on me too, I thank his beams!
Sometime I feel their warmth; and eat and sleep.
PRO. Does Tecnicus read to thee?
ORG. Yes, forsooth,
He is my master surely; yonder door
Opens upon his study.
PRO. Happy creatures!
Such people toil not, sweet, in heats of state,
Nor sink in thaws of greatness; their affections
Keep order with the limits of their modesty;
Their love is love of virtue.—What's thy name?
ORG. Aplotes, sumptuous master, a poor wretch.
EUPH. Dost thou want anything?
ORG. Books, Venus, books.
PRO. Lady, a new conceit comes in my thought,
And most available for both our comforts.

[8] rudiments.

EUPH. My lord!
PRO. Whiles I endeavor to deserve
Your father's blessing to our loves, this scholar
May daily at some certain hours attend
What notice I can write of my success,
Here in this grove, and give it to [270
your hands;
The like from you to me: so can we never,
Barred of our mutual speech, want sure intelligence,
And thus our hearts may talk when our tongues cannot.
EUPH. Occasion is most favorable; use it.
PRO. Aplotes, wilt thou wait us twice a day, [281
At nine i' the morning and at four at night,
Here in this bower, to convey such letters
As each shall send to other? Do it willingly,
Safely, and secretly, and I will furnish
Thy study, or what else thou canst desire.
ORG. Jove, make me thankful, thankful, I beseech thee, [291
Propitious Jove! I will prove sure and trusty:
You will not fail me books?
PRO. Nor aught besides
Thy heart can wish. This lady's name's Euphranea,
Mine Prophilus.
ORG. I have a pretty memory;
It must prove my best friend. I will not miss [301
One minute of the hours appointed.
PRO. Write
The books thou wouldst have bought thee in a note,
Or take thyself some money.
ORG. No, no money;
Money to scholars is a spirit invisible,
We dare not finger it: or books, or nothing. [310
PRO. Books of what sort thou wilt: do not forget
Our names.
ORG. I warrant ye, I warrant ye.
PRO. Smile, Hymen, on the growth of our desires;
We'll feed thy torches with eternal fires!
[*Exeunt* PROPHILUS *and* EUPHRANEA.
ORG. Put out thy torches, Hymen, or their light [320
Shall meet a darkness of eternal night!
Inspire me, Mercury, with swift deceits.
Ingenious Fate has leapt into mine arms,
Beyond the compass of my brain. Mortality
Creeps on the dung of earth, and cannot reach
The riddles which are purposed by the gods.
Great arts best write themselves in their own stories; [331
They die too basely who outlive their glories.

ACT TWO

SCENE I

We are in the house of the jealous BASSANES, *who is telling* PHULAS *what he will do to keep* PENTHEA *from temptation.*

BASS. I'll have that window next the street dammed up;
It gives too full a prospect to temptation,
And courts a gazer's glances. There's a lust
Committed by the eye, that sweats and travails, [10
Plots, wakes, contrives, till the deformed bear-whelp,
Adultery, be licked into the act,
The very act. That light shall be dammed up;
D'ye hear, sir?
PHU. I do hear, my lord; a mason
Shall be provided suddenly.
BASS. Some rogue, [19
Some rogue of your confederacy, factor
For slaves and strumpets, to convey close packets
From this spruce springal and [from] t'other youngster,
That gaudy earwig, or my lord your patron,
Whose pensioner you are. I'll tear thy throat out,

Son of a cat, ill-looking hound's-head, rip up
Thy ulcerous maw, if I but scent a paper,
A scroll, but half as big as what can cover
A wart upon thy nose, a spot, a pimple,
Directed to my lady; it may prove
A mystical preparative to lewdness.
PHU. Care shall be had: I will turn every thread
About me to an eye. <Here's a sweet life!>
BASS. The city housewives, cunning in the traffic
Of chamber merchandise, set all at price
By wholesale; yet they wipe their mouths and simper,
Cull,[1] kiss, and cry "sweetheart," and stroke the head
Which they have branched; and all is well again!
Dull clods of dirt, who dare not feel the rubs.
Stuck on the[ir] foreheads!
PHU. 'Tis a villanous world;
One cannot hold his own in't.
BASS. Dames at court,
Who flaunt in riots, run another bias;
Their pleasure heaves the patient ass that suffers
Up on the stilts of office, titles, incomes;
Promotion justifies the shame, and sues for't.
Poor honor, thou art stabbed, and bleed'st to death
By such unlawful hire! The country mistress
Is yet more wary, and in blushes hides
Whatever trespass draws her troth to guilt.
But all are false; on this truth I am bold,
No woman but can fall, and doth, or would.—
Now for the newest news about the city;
What blab the voices, sirrah?
PHU. O, my lord,
The rarest, quaintest, strangest, tickling news
That ever—
BASS. Hey-day! up and ride me, rascal!
What is't?
PHU. Forsooth, they say the king has mewed[2]
All his gray beard, instead of which is budded
Another of a pure carnation color,
Speckled with green and russet.
BASS. Ignorant block!
PHU. Yes, truly; and 'tis talked about the streets
That, since Lord Ithocles came home, the lions
Never left roaring, at which noise the bears
Have danced their very hearts out.
BASS. Dance out thine too.
PHU. Besides, Lord Orgilus is fled to Athens
Upon a fiery dragon, and 'tis thought
'A never can return.
BASS. Grant it, Apollo!
PHU. Moreover, please your lordship, 'tis reported
For certain, that whoever is found jealous
Without apparent proof that's wife is wanton
Shall be divorced; but this is but she-news:
I had it from a midwife. I have more yet.
BASS. Antic, no more! Idiots and stupid fools
Grate my calamities. Why to be fair
Should yield presumption of a faulty soul—
Look to the doors.
PHU. <The horn of plenty crest him!> [*Exit.*
BASS. Swarms of confusion huddle in my thoughts
In rare distemper.—Beauty! O, it is
An unmatched blessing or a horrid curse.
She comes, she comes! so shoots the morning forth,
Spangled with pearls of transparent dew.
The way to poverty is to be rich,
As I in her am wealthy; but for her,
In all contents a bankrupt.— [*With the entry of* PENTHEA *and* GRAUSIS, *he changes his tone.*
Loved Penthea!

[1] embrace.

[2] shed.

How fares my heart's best joy?
GRAU. In sooth, not well,
She is so over-sad.
BASS. Leave chattering, magpie.—
Thy brother is returned, sweet, safe, and honored
With a triumphant victory; thou shalt visit him:
We will to court, where, if it be thy pleasure,
Thou shalt appear in such a ravishing lustre
Of jewels above value, that the dames
Who brave it there, in rage to be outshined,
Shall hide them in their closets, and, unseen,
Fret in their tears; whiles every wondering eye
Shall crave none other brightness but thy presence.
Choose thine own recreations; be a queen
Of what delights thou fanciest best, what company,
What place, what times; do anything, do all things
Youth can command, so thou wilt chase these clouds
From the pure firmament of thy fair looks.
GRAU. Now 'tis well said, my lord.—
What, lady! laugh,
Be merry; time is precious.
BASS. <Furies whip thee!>
PEN. Alas, my lord, this language to your hand-maid
Sounds as would music to the deaf; I need
No braveries nor cost of art to draw
The whiteness of my name into offence:
Let such, if any such there are, who covet
A curiosity of admiration,
By laying-out their plenty to full view,
Appear in gaudy outsides; my attires
Shall suit the inward fashion of my mind;
From which if your opinion, nobly placed,
Change not the livery your words bestow,
My fortunes with my hopes are at the highest.
BASS. This house, methinks, stands somewhat too much inward,
It is too melancholy; we'll remove
Nearer the court: or what thinks my Penthea
Of the delightful island we command?
Rule me as thou canst wish.
PEN. I am no mistress.
Whither you please, I must attend; all ways
Are alike pleasant to me.
GRAU. Island; prison!
A prison is as gaysome: we'll no islands;
Marry, out upon 'em! Whom shall we see there?
Sea-gulls, and porpoises, and water-rats,
And crabs, and mews, and dog-fish; goodly gear
For a young lady's dealing—or an old one's!
On no terms, islands; I'll be stewed first.
BASS. <Grausis,
You are a juggling bawd.> This sadness, sweetest,
Becomes not youthful blood.—[*To* GRAUSIS.] <I'll have you pounded.>
For my sake put on a more cheerful mirth;
Thou'lt mar thy cheeks, and make me old in griefs.—
[*To* GRAUSIS.] <Damnable bitch-fox!>
GRAU. I am thick of hearing
Still, when the wind blows southerly.—
What think ye,
If your fresh lady breed young bones, my lord?
Would not a chopping boy d'ye good at heart?
But, as you said—
BASS. <I'll spit thee on a stake,
Or chop thee into collops!>
GRAU. Pray, speak louder.
Sure, sure the wind blows south still.
PEN. Thou prat'st madly.
BASS. 'Tis very hot; I sweat extremely.

Re-enter PHULAS.

Now?
PHU. A herd of lords, sir.
BASS. Ha!
PHU. A flock of ladies.

Bass. Where?
Phu. Shoals of horses.
Bass. Peasant, how?
Phu. Caroches [3]
In drifts; th' one enter, th' other stand without, sir:
And now I vanish. [*Exit.*

Enter Prophilus, Hemophil, Groneas, Christalla, *and* Philema.

Pro. Noble Bassanes! [240
Bass. Most welcome, Prophilus; ladies, gentlemen,
To all my heart is open; you all honor me—
<A tympany swells in my head already>
Honor me bountifully. <How they flutter,
Wagtails and jays together!>
Pro. From your brother [250
By virtue of your love to him, I require
Your instant presence, fairest.
Pen. He is well, sir?
Pro. The gods preserve him ever! Yet, dear beauty,
I find some alteration in him lately,
Since his return to Sparta.—My good lord,
I pray, use no delay.
Bass. We had not needed [260
An invitation, if his sister's health
Had not fallen into question.—Haste, Penthea,
Slack not a minute.—Lead the way, good Prophilus;
I'll follow step by step.
Pro. Your arm, fair madam
[*All go out save* Bassanes *and* Grausis, *the former staying the latter as she is about to follow the others.* [270
Bass. One word with your old bawdship: th' hadst been better
Railed at the sins thou worshipp'st than have thwarted
My will: I'll use thee cursedly.
Grau. You dote;
You are beside yourself. A politician
In jealousy? No, y'are too gross, too vulgar.
Pish, teach not me my trade; I know my cue. [281
My crossing you sinks me into her trust,
By which I shall know all; my trade's a sure one.
Bass. Forgive me, Grausis, 'twas consideration
I relished not; [4] but have a care now.
Grau. Fear not,
I am no new-come-to't.
Bass. Thy life's upon it, [290
And so is mine. My agonies are infinite.
[*Exeunt.*

Scene II

Ithocles *is alone in a room in the palace. He is deeply repentant of his treatment of* Penthea, *and is beginning to realize that he entertains a hopeless love for the Princess.*

Ith. Ambition! 'tis of vipers' breed: it gnaws
A passage through the womb that gave it motion.
Ambition, like a seelëd [5] dove, mounts upward, [11
Higher and higher still, to perch on clouds,
But tumbles headlong down with heavier ruin.
So squibs and crackers fly into the air,
Then, only breaking with a noise, they vanish
In stench and smoke. Morality, applied
To timely practice, keeps the soul in tune,
At whose sweet music all our actions dance: [21
But this is form of books and school-tradition;
It physics not the sickness of a mind
Broken with griefs: strong fevers are not eased
With counsel, but with best receipts and means—
Means, speedy means and certain; that's the cure. [30

Enter Armostes *and* Crotolon.

Arm. You stick, Lord Crotolon, upon a point
Too nice and too unnecessary; Prophilus

[3] coaches.
[4] did not understand.
[5] blinded.

Is every way desertful. I am confident
Your wisdom is too ripe to need instruction
From your son's tutelage.
CROT. Yet not so ripe, [39
My lord Armostes, that it dares to dote
Upon the painted meat of smooth persuasion,
Which tempts me to a breach of faith.
ITH. Not yet
Resolved, my lord? Why, if your son's consent
Be so available, we'll write to Athens
For his repair to Sparta. The king's hand
Will join with our desires; he has [50 been moved to't.
ARM. Yes, and the king himself impórtuned Crotolon
For a dispatch.
CROT. Kings may command; their wills
Are laws not to be questioned.
ITH. By this marriage
You knit an union so devout, so hearty,
Between your loves to me and mine to yours [61
As if mine own blood had an interest in it;
For Prophilus is mine, and I am his.
CROT. My lord, my lord!—
ITH., *seeing that he hesitates.* What, good sir? Speak your thought.
CROT. Had this sincerity been real once,
My Orgilus had not been now unwived,
Nor your lost sister buried in a bride-bed.
Your uncle here, Armostes, knows this [71 truth;
For, had your father Thrasus lived—but peace
Dwell in his grave! I have done.
ARM. Y'are bold and bitter
ITH. <'A presses home the injury; it smarts.>
No reprehensions, uncle; I deserve 'em.
Yet, gentle sir, consider what the heat
Of an unsteady youth, a giddy brain, [80
Green indiscretion, flattery of greatness,
Rawness of judgment, wilfulness in folly,
Thoughts vagrant as the wind, and as uncertain,
Might lead a boy in years to. 'Twas a fault,
A capital fault; for then I could not dive
Into the secrets of commanding love;
Since when, experience, by the extremes[6] (in others), [90
Hath forced me [to] collect.[7] And, trust me, Crotolon,
I will redeem those wrongs with any service
Your satisfaction can require for current.
ARM. Thy acknowledgment is satisfaction:
What would you more?
CROT. I'm conquered: if Euphranea
Herself admit the motion, let it be so;
I doubt not my son's liking. [101
ITH. Use my fortunes,
Life, power, sword, and heart: all are your own.
ARM. The princess, with your sister.

Enter CALANTHA, PENTHEA, EUPHRANEA, CHRISTALLA, PHILEMA, GRAUSIS, BASSANES, *and* PROPHILUS.

CAL. I present ye
A stranger here in court, my lord; for, did not [111
Desire of seeing you draw her abroad,
We had not been made happy in her company.
ITH. You are a gracious princess.—Sister, wedlock
Holds too severe a passion in your nature,
Which can engross all duty to your husband,
Without attendance on so dear a mistress.— [121
[*To* BASSANES.] 'Tis not my brother's pleasure, I presume,
T' immure her in a chamber.
BASS. 'Tis her will;
She governs her own hours. Noble Ithocles,
We thank the gods for your success and welfare:
Our lady has of late been indisposed, [130
Else we had waited on you with the first.
ITH. How does Penthea now?
PEN. You best know, brother,

[6] B, extremities. [7] understand.

From whom my health and comforts are derived.
BASS. <I like the answer well; 'tis sad and modest.
There may be tricks yet, tricks.—Have an eye, Grausis!>
CAL. Now, Crotolon, the suit we joined in must not [141
Fall by too long demur.
CROT. 'Tis granted, princess, For my part.
ARM. With condition that his son Favor the contract.
CAL. Such delay is easy.—
The joys of marriage make thee, Prophilus,
A proud deserver of Euphranea's love,
And her of thy desert! [151
PRO. Most sweetly gracious!
BASS. The joys of marriage are the heaven on earth,
Life's paradise, great princess, the soul's quiet,
Sinews of concord, earthly immortality,
Eternity of pleasures; no restoratives
Like to a constant woman! <But where is she? [160
'Twould puzzle all the gods but to create
Such a new monster.> I can speak by proof,
For I rest in Elysium; 'tis my happiness.
CROT. Euphranea, how are you resolved (speak freely),
In your affections to this gentleman?
EUPH. Nor more nor less than as his love assures me; [169
Which—if your liking with my brother's warrants—
I cannot but approve in all points worthy.
CROT. So, so!—[*To* PROPHILUS.] I know your answer.
ITH. 'T had been pity
To sunder hearts so equally consented.

Enter HEMOPHIL.

HEM. The king, Lord Ithocles, commands your presence;—
And, fairest princess, yours. [180
CAL. We will attend him.

Enter GRONEAS.

GRO. Where are the lords? All must unto the king
Without delay: the Prince of Argos—
CAL. Well, sir?
GRO. Is coming to the court, sweet lady.
CAL. How!
The Prince of Argos? [190
GRO. 'Twas my fortune, madam,
T' enjoy the honor of these happy tidings.
ITH. Penthea!
PEN. Brother?
ITH. Let me an hour hence
Meet you alone within the palace-grove;
I have some secret with you— Prithee, friend, [199
Conduct her thither, and have special care
The walks be cleared of any to disturb us.
PRO. I shall.
BASS. <How's that?>
ITH. Alone, pray be alone.—
I am your creature, princess.—On, my lords! [*Exeunt all but* BASSANES.
BASS. "Alone"! alone! What means that word "alone"? [210
Why might not I be there?—hum!—he's her brother.
Brothers and sisters are but flesh and blood,
And this same whoreson court-ease is temptation
To a rebellion in the veins; besides,
His fine friend Prophilus must be her guardian: [219
Why may not he dispatch a business nimbly
Before the other come? or—pandering pandering
For one another—be't to sister, mother,
Wife, cousin, anything—'mongst youths of mettle
Is in request; it is so—stubborn fate!
But, if I be a cuckold, and can know it,
I will be fell, and fell.

Re-enter GRONEAS. [230

GRO. My lord, y'are called for.

BASS. Most heartily I thank ye.
Where's my wife, pray?
GRO. Retired amongst the ladies.
BASS. Still I thank ye.
There's an old waiter with her; saw you her too?
GRO. She sits i' th' presence-lobby fast asleep, sir.
BASS. Asleep! asleep, sir! [240
GRO. Is your lordship troubled?
You will not to the king?
BASS. Your humblest vassal.
GRO. Your servant, my good lord.
BASS. I wait your footsteps.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE III

PROPHILUS *has brought* PENTHEA *to the grove. She feels that her betrothal made her the wife of* ORGILUS, *and that the state in which she lives with* BASSANES *is one of concubinage.*

PRO. In this walk, lady, will your brother find you:
And, with your favor, give me leave a little
To work a preparation. In his fashion [10
I have observed of late some kind of slackness
To such alacrity as nature [once]
And custom took delight in; sadness grows
Upon his recreations, which he hoards
In such a willing silence, that to question
The grounds will argue little skill in friendship,
And less good manners. [20
PEN. Sir, I'm not inquisitive
Of secrecies without an invitation.
PRO. With pardon, lady, not a syllable
Of mine implies so rude a sense; the drift—

Enter ORGILUS, *disguised as before.*

[*To* ORGILUS.] Do thy best
To make this lady merry for an hour.
[*Exit* PROPHILUS.
ORG. Your will shall be a law, sir. [30
PEN. Prithee, leave me;
I have some private thoughts I would account with;
Use thou thine own.
ORG. Speak on, fair nymph; our souls
Can dance as well to music of the spheres
As any's who have feasted with the gods.
PEN. Your school-terms are too troublesome.
ORG. What Heaven [40
Refines mortality from dross of earth
But such as uncompounded beauty hallows
With glorified perfection?
PEN. Set thy wits
In a less wild proportion.
ORG. Time can never
On the white table of unguilty faith
Write counterfeit dishonor; turn those eyes, [50
The arrows of pure love, upon that fire,
Which once rose to a flame, perfumed with vows
As sweetly scented as the incense smoking
On Vesta's altars; virgin tears (like
The holiest odors) sprinkled dews to feed 'em [8]
And to increase their fervor.
PEN. Be not frantic.
ORG. All pleasures are but mere imagination, [61
Feeding the hungry appetite with steam
And sight of banquet, whilst the body pines,
Not relishing the real taste of foods:
Such is the leanness of a heart divided
From intercourse of troth-contracted loves;
No horror should deface that precious figure [70
Sealed with the lively stamp of equal souls.
PEN. Away! some Fury hath bewitched thy tongue.
The breath of ignorance, that flies from thence,
Ripens a knowledge in me of afflictions
Above all sufferance. Thing of talk, begone!
Begone, without reply! [80
ORG. Be just, Penthea,

[8] In B, these two lines read:
The holiest altars, virgin tears (like
On Vesta's odors) sprinkled dews to feed 'em,

In thy commands; when thou send'st forth a doom
Of banishment, know first on whom it lights.
Thus I take off the shroud in which my cares
Are folded up from view of common eyes.
[*Throws off his scholar's dress.*
What is thy sentence next? [90
PEN. Rash man! thou layest
A blemish on mine honor, with the hazard
Of thy too-desperate life: yet, I profess,
By all the laws of ceremonious wedlock,
I have not given admittance to one thought
Of female change since cruelty enforced
Divorce betwixt my body and my heart.
Why would you fall from goodness thus?
ORG. O, rather [100
Examine me, how I could live to say
I have been much, much wronged. 'Tis for thy sake
I put on this imposture: dear Penthea,
If thy soft bosom be not turned to marble,
Thou'lt pity our calamities; my interest
Confirms me thou art mine still.
PEN. Lend your hand;
With both of mine I clasp it thus, thus kiss it, [111
Thus kneel before ye. [*Kneels.*
ORG. You instruct my duty. [*Kneels.*
PEN. We may stand up. [*They rise.*]
—Have you aught else to urge
Of new demand? As for the old, forget it;
'Tis buried in an everlasting silence,
And shall be, shall be ever. What more would ye? [120
ORG. I would possess my wife; the equity
Of very reason bids me.
PEN. Is that all?
ORG. Why, 'tis the all of me, myself.
PEN. Remove
Your steps some distance from me: at this space
A few words I dare change; but first put on [130
Your borrowed shape.
ORG. You are obeyed; 'tis done.
[*He resumes his disguise.*
PEN. How, Orgilus, by promise I was thine
The heavens do witness: they can witness too
A rape done on my truth: how I do love thee [139
Yet, Orgilus, and yet, must best appear
In tendering thy freedom; for I find
The constant preservation of thy merit,
By thy not daring to attempt my fame
With injury of any loose conceit,
Which might give deeper wounds to discontents.
Continue this fair race:[9] then, though I cannot
Add to thy comfort, yet I shall more often [150
Remember from what fortune I am fallen,
And pity mine own ruin. Live, live happy—
Happy in thy next choice, that thou mayst people
This barren age with virtues in thy issue!
And O, when thou art married, think on me
With mercy, not contempt! I hope thy wife, [161
Hearing my story, will not scorn my fall.
Now let us part.
ORG. "Part"! yet advise thee better:
Penthea is the wife to Orgilus,
And ever shall be.
PEN. Never shall nor will.
ORG. How!
PEN. Hear me; in a word I'll tell thee why. [170
The virgin-dowry which my birth bestowed
Is ravished by another; my true love
Abhors to think that Orgilus deserved
No better favors than a second bed.
ORG. I must not take this reason.
PEN. To confirm it,
Should I outlive my bondage, let me meet
Another worse than this and less desired,
If, of all men alive, thou shouldst but touch [181
My lip or hand again!
ORG. Penthea, now

[9] course.

I tell ye, you grow wanton in my sufferance:
Come, sweet, th'art mine.
PEN. Uncivil sir, forbear!
Or I can turn affection into vengeance;
Your reputation, if you value any, [189
Lies bleeding at my feet. Unworthy man,
If ever henceforth thou appear in language,
Message, or letter, to betray my frailty,
I'll call thy former protestations lust,
And curse my stars for forfeit of my judgment.
Go thou, fit only for disguise and walks,
To hide thy shame: this once I spare thy life.
I laugh at mine own confidence; my [200
sorrows
By thee are made inferior to my fortunes.
If ever thou didst harbor worthy love,
Dare not to answer. My good genius guide me,
That I may never see thee more!—Go from me!
ORG. I'll tear my veil of politic French off, [209
And stand up like a man resolved to do:
Action, not words, shall show me.—O Penthea! [*Exit.*
PEN. 'A sighed my name, sure, as he parted from me:
I fear I was too rough. Alas, poor gentleman!
'A looked not like the ruins of his youth,
But like the ruins of those ruins. Honor,
How much we fight with weakness to preserve thee! [*Walks aside.* [220

Enter BASSANES *and* GRAUSIS.

BASS. Fie on thee! damn thee, rotten maggot, damn thee!
Sleep? sleep at court? and now? Achës, convulsions,
Imposthumes, rheums, gouts, palsies, clog thy bones
A dozen years more yet!
GRAU. Now y'are in humors.
BASS. She's by herself; there's hope of that; she's sad too; [231
She's in strong contemplation; yes, and fixed:
The signs are wholesome.
GRAU. Very wholesome, truly.
BASS. Hold your chops,[10] nightmare!—Lady, come; your brother
Is carried to his closet; you must thither.
PEN. Not well, my lord?
BASS. A sudden fit; 'twill off! [240
Some surfeit or disorder.—How dost, dearest?
PEN. Your news is none o' th' best.

Re-enter PROPHILUS.

PRO. The chief of men,
The excellentest Ithocles, desires
Your presence, madam.
BASS. We are hasting to him.
PEN. In vain we labor in this course of life [250
To piece our journey out at length, or crave
Respite of breath: our home is in the grave.
BASS. Perfect philosophy!
PEN. Then let us care
To live so, that our reckonings may fall even
When we're to make account.
PRO. He cannot fear [260
Who builds on noble grounds: sickness or pain
Is the deserver's exercise;[11] and such
Your virtuous brother to the world is known.
Speak comfort to him, lady; be all gentle:
Stars fall but in the grossness of our sight;
A good man dying, th' earth doth lose a light. [*Exeunt.* [270

ACT THREE

SCENE I

ORGILUS *is with* TECNICUS *in the philosopher's study. He is in his own shape once more.*

TEC. Be well advised; let not a resolution
Of giddy rashness choke the breath of reason.
ORG. It shall not, most sage master.

[10] jaws.
[11] discipline.

TEC. I am jealous; [1] [9
For if the borrowed shape so late put on
Inferred a consequence, we must conclude
Some violent design of sudden nature
Hath shook that shadow off, to fly upon
A new-hatched execution. Orgilus,
Take heed thou hast not, under our integrity,
Shrouded unlawful plots; our mortal eyes
Pierce not the secrets of your heart; the gods
Are only privy to them. [20
ORG. Learned Tecnicus,
Such doubts are causeless; and, to clear the truth
From misconceit, the present state commands me.
The Prince of Argos comes himself in person
In quest of great Calantha for his bride,
Our kingdom's heir; besides, mine only sister, [30
Euphranea, is disposed to Prophilus;
Lastly, the king is sending letters for me
To Athens, for my quick repair to court:
Please to accept these reasons.
TEC. Just ones, Orgilus,
Not to be contradicted: yet beware
Of an unsure foundation; no fair colors
Can fortify a building faintly jointed.
I have observed a growth in thy aspéct
Of dangerous extent, sudden, and—look to't— [41
I might add, certain—
ORG. My aspéct! Could art
Run through mine inmost thoughts, it should not sift
An inclination there more than what suited
With justice of mine honor.
TEC. I believe it. [49
But know then, Orgilus, what honor is.
Honor consists not in a bare opinion
By doing any act that feeds content,
Brave in appearance, 'cause we think it brave;
Such honor comes by accident, not nature,
Proceeding from the vices of our passion,
Which makes our reason drunk: but real honor
Is the reward of virtue, and acquired [59
By justice, or by valor which for basis
Hath justice to uphold it. He then fails
In honor who, for lucre [or] revenge,
Commits thefts, murders, treasons, and adulteries,
With suchlike, by intrenching on just laws,
Whose sovereignty is best preserved by justice.
Thus, as you see how honor must be grounded [70
On knowledge, not opinion—for opinion
Relies on probability and accident,
But knowledge on necessity and truth—
I leave thee to the fit consideration
Of what becomes the grace of real honor,
Wishing success to all thy virtuous meanings.
ORG. The gods increase thy wisdom, reverend oracle, [79
And in thy precepts make me ever thrifty!
TEC. I thank thy wish. [*Exit* ORGILUS.
Much mystery of fate
Lies hid in that man's fortunes; curiosity
May lead his actions into rare attempts.
But let the gods be moderators still;
No human power can prevent their will.

ARMOSTES *enters, bearing a casket.*

From whence come ye? [89
ARM. From King Amyclas. Pardon
My interruption of your studies. Here,
In this sealed box, he sends a treasure [to you,]
Dear to him as his crown. 'A prays your gravity
You would examine, ponder, sift, and bolt
The pith and circumstance of every tittle
The scroll within contains.
TEC. What is't, Armostes?
ARM. It is the health of Sparta, the king's life, [101
Sinews and safety of the commonwealth;
The sum of what the oracle delivered
When last he visited the prophetic temple
At Delphos: what his reasons are, for which,
After so long a silence, he requires
Your counsel now, grave man, his majesty

[1] suspicious.

Will soon himself acquaint you with.
TEC., *taking the casket.* Apollo [110
Inspire my intellect!—The Prince of Argos
Is entertained?
ARM. He is; and has demanded
Our princess for his wife; which I conceive
One special cause the king impórtunes you
For resolution of the oracle.
TEC. My duty to the king, good peace to Sparta, [121
And fair day to Armostes!
ARM. Like to Tecnicus! [*Exit.*

SCENE II

The antechamber of ITHOCLES' *apartment in the palace. A song is sung within, to soft music.*

Can you paint a thought? or number
Every fancy in a slumber?
Can you count soft minutes roving
From a dial's point by moving?
Can you grasp a sigh? or, lastly,
Rob a virgin's honor chastely?
No, O, no! yet you may [10
Sooner do both that and this,
This and that, and never miss,
Than by any praise display
Beauty's beauty; such a glory,
As beyond all fate, all story,
All arms, all arts,
All loves, all hearts,
Greater than those or they,
Do, shall, and must obey. [19

While the song is being sung, PROPHILUS, BASSANES, PENTHEA, *and* GRAUSIS *pass over the stage.* BASSANES *and* GRAUSIS *enter again softly, when the song is done, and listen intently.*

BASS. All silent, calm, secure.—Grausis, no creaking?
No noise? Dost hear nothing?
GRAU. Not a mouse,
Or whisper of the wind.
BASS. The floor is matted; [30
The bedposts sure are steel or marble.—Soldiers
Should not affect, methinks, strains so effeminate:
Sounds of such delicacy are but fawnings
Upon the sloth of luxury; they heighten
Cinders of covert lust up to a flame.
GRAU. What do you mean, my lord? Speak low; that gabbling
Of yours will but undo us. [40
BASS. Chamber-combats
Are felt, not heard.
PRO., *within.* 'A wakes.
BASS. What's that?
ITH., *within.* Who's there?
Sister?—All quit the room else.
BASS. 'Tis consented!

Re-enter PROPHILUS.

PRO. Lord Bassanes, your brother would be private; [50
We must forbear; his sleep hath newly left him.
Please ye withdraw.
BASS. By any means; 'tis fit.
PRO. Pray, gentlewoman, walk too.
GRAU. Yes, I will, sir. [*Exeunt omnes.*

SCENE III

The scene opens, discovering ITHOCLES *in a chair in his apartment (on the rear stage), and* PENTHEA *beside him.*

ITH. Sit nearer, sister, to me; nearer yet.
We had one father, in one womb took life,
Were brought up twins together, yet have lived
At distance, like two strangers. I could wish [10
That the first pillow whereon I was cradled
Had proved to me a grave.
PEN. You had been happy:
Then had you never known that sin of life
Which blots all following glories with a vengeance,
For forfeiting the last will of the dead,
From whom you had your being. [20
ITH. Sad Penthea,
Thou canst not be too cruel; my rash spleen
Hath with a violent hand plucked from thy bosom
A love-blest [2] heart, to grind it into dust;

[2] B. lover-blest.

For which mine's now a-breaking.
PEN. Not yet, Heaven,
I do beseech thee! First let some wild fires
Scorch, not consume it! may the heat be cherished
With desires infinite, but hopes impossible!
ITH. Wronged soul, thy prayers are heard.
PEN. Here, lo, I breathe,
A miserable creature, led to ruin
By an unnatural brother!
ITH. I consume
In languishing affections for that trespass,
Yet cannot die.
PEN. The handmaid to the wages
Of country toil drinks the untroubled streams
With leaping kids and with the bleating lambs,
And so allays her thirst secure; whiles I
Quench my hot sighs with fleetings[3] of my tears.
ITH. The laborer doth eat his coarsest bread,
Earned with his sweat, and lies him down to sleep;
While[4] every bit I touch turns in digestion
To gall as bitter as Penthea's curse.
Put me to any penance for my tyranny,
And I will call thee merciful.
PEN. Pray kill me,
Rid me from living with a jealous husband;
Then we will join in friendship, be again
Brother and sister.—Kill me, pray; nay, will ye?
ITH. How does thy lord esteem thee?
PEN. Such an one
As only you have made me: a faith-breaker,
A spotted whore. Forgive me: I am one
In act, not in desires, the gods must witness.
ITH. Thou dost belie thy friend.
PEN. I do not, Ithocles;
For she that's wife to Orgilus, and lives
In known adultery with Bassanes,
Is at the best a whore. Wilt kill me now?
The ashes of our parents will assume
Some dreadful figure, and appear to charge
Thy bloody guilt, that hast betrayed their name
To infamy in this reproachful match.
ITH. After my victories abroad, at home
I meet despair; ingratitude of nature
Hath made my actions monstrous. Thou shalt stand
A deity, my sister, and be worshipped
For thy resolvëd martyrdom; wronged maids
And married wives shall to thy hallowed shrine
Offer their orisons, and sacrifice
Pure turtles, crowned with myrtle, if thy pity
Unto a yielding brother's pressure lend
One finger but to ease it.
PEN. O, no more!
ITH. Death waits to waft me to the Stygian banks,
And free me from this chaos of my bondage;
And, till thou wilt forgive, I must endure.
PEN. Who is the saint you serve?
ITH. Friendship, or [nearness]
Of birth to any but my sister, durst not
Have moved that question, as a secret, sister,
I dare not murmur to myself.
PEN. Let me,
By your new protestations I conjure ye,
Partake her name.
ITH. Her name?—'tis—'tis—I dare not.
PEN. All your respects are forged.[5]
ITH. They are not. Peace!
Calantha is—the princess—the king's daughter—
Sole heir of Sparta.—Me, most miserable,
Do I now love thee? For my injuries
Revenge thyself with bravery, and gossip
My treasons to the king's ears, do. Calantha

[3] floods. [4] B, which. [5] pretended.

Knows it not yet, nor Prophilus, my nearest.
PEN. Suppose you were contracted to her, would it not [130
Split even your very soul to see her father
Snatch her out of your arms against her will,
And force her on the Prince of Argos?
ITH. Trouble not
The fountains of mine eyes with thine own story;
I sweat in blood for't.
PEN. We are reconciled. [139
Alas, sir, being children, but two branches
Of one stock, 'tis not fit we should divide:
Have comfort, you may find it.
ITH. Yes, in thee;
Only in thee, Penthea mine.
PEN. If sorrows
Have not too much dulled my infected brain,
I'll cheer invention for an active strain.
ITH. Mad man! why have I wronged a maid so excellent! [150

The furiously jealous BASSANES *rushes in, brandishing a poniard.* PROPHILUS, GRONEAS, HEMOPHIL, *and* GRAUSIS *follow, seeking to stop him.*

BASS. I can forbear no longer; more, I will not.
Keep off your hands, or fall upon my point.—
Patience is tired; for, like a slow-paced ass, [160
Ye ride my easy nature, and proclaim
My sloth to vengeance a reproach and property.
ITH. The meaning of this rudeness?
PRO. He's distracted.
PEN. O, my grieved lord!—
GRAU. Sweet lady, come not near him;
He holds his perilous weapon in his hand
To prick 'a cares not whom nor where; see, see, see! [171
BASS. My birth is noble: though the popular blast
Of vanity, as giddy as thy youth,
Hath reared thy name up to bestride a cloud,
Or progress in the chariot of the sun,
I am no clod of trade, to lackey pride,
Nor, like your slave of expectation, wait
The bawdy hinges of your doors, or whistle [181
For mystical conveyance to your bed-sports.
GRO. Fine humors! they become him.
HEM. How 'a stares,
Struts, puffs, and sweats! Most admirable[6] lunacy!
ITH. But that I may conceive the spirit of wine
Has took possession of your soberer custom, [191
I'd say you were unmannerly.
PEN. Dear brother!—
BASS. "Unmannerly"! Mew, kitling! Smooth Formality
Is usher to the rankness of the blood,
But Impudence bears up the train. Indeed, sir,
Your fiery mettle, or your springal[7] blaze [200
Of huge renown, is no sufficient royalty
To print upon my forehead the scorn, "cuckold."
ITH. His jealousy has robbed him of his wits;
'A talks 'a knows not what.
BASS. Yes, and 'a knows
To whom 'a talks; to one that franks his lust
In swine-security of bestial incest. [210
ITH. Ha, devil!
BASS. I will hallo't;[8] though I blush more
To name the filthiness than thou to act it.
ITH. Monster! [*Draws his sword.*
PRO. Sir, by our friendship—
PEN. By our bloods,
Will you quite both undo us, brother?
GRAU. Out on him! [220
These are his megrims, firks, and melancholies.
HEM. Well said, old touch-hole.
GRO. Kick him out of doors.
PEN. With favor, let me speak.—My lord, what slackness

6 surprising. 7 youthful. 8 proclaim.

In my obedience hath deserved this rage?
Except humility and silent duty
Have drawn on your unquiet, my simplicity
Ne'er studied your vexation.
BASS. Light of beauty,
Deal not ungently with a desperate wound!
No breach of reason dares make war with her
Whose looks are sovereignty, whose breath is balm.
O, that I could preserve thee in fruition
As in devotion!
PEN. Sir, may every evil
Locked in Pandora's box shower, in your presence,
On my unhappy head, if, since you made me
A partner in your bed, I have been faulty
In one unseemly thought against your honor!
ITH. Purge not his griefs, Penthea.
BASS. Yes, say on,
Excellent creature!—[*To* ITHOCLES.] Good, be not a hindrance
To peace and praise of virtue.—O, my senses
Are charmed with sounds celestial!—On, dear, on:
I never gave you one ill word; say, did I?
Indeed I did not.
PEN. Nor, by Juno's forehead,
Was I e'er guilty of a wanton error.
BASS. A goddess! let me kneel.
GRAU. Alas, kind animal!
ITH. No; but for penance.
BASS. Noble sir, what is it?
With gladness I embrace it; yet, pray let not
My rashness teach you to be too unmerciful.
ITH. When you shall show good proof that manly wisdom,
Not overswayed by passion or opinion,
Knows how to lead [your] judgment, then this lady,
Your wife, my sister, shall return in safety
Home, to be guided by you; but, till first
I can out of clear evidence approve it,
She shall be my care.
BASS. Rip my bosom up,
I'll stand the execution with a constancy;
This torture is unsufferable.
ITH. Well, sir,
I dare not trust her to your fury.
BASS. But
Penthea says not so.
PEN. She needs no tongue
To plead excuse who never purposed wrong. [*Goes out with* ITHOCLES *and* PROPHILUS.
HEM., *to* GRAUSIS. Virgin of reverence and antiquity,
Stay you behind.
GRO. The court wants not your diligence. [HEMOPHIL *and* GRONEAS *go out.*
GRAU. What will you do, my lord? My lady's gone;
I am denied to follow.
BASS. I may see her,
Or speak to her once more?
GRAU. And feel her too, man;
Be of good cheer, she's your own flesh and bone.
BASS. Diseases desperate must find cures alike.
She swore she has been true.
GRAU. True, on my modesty.
BASS. Let him want truth who credits not her vows!
Much wrong I did her, but her brother infinite;
Rumor will voice me the contempt of manhood,
Should I run on thus. Some way I must try
To outdo art, and jealousy decry.[9]

SCENE IV

The PRINCE OF ARGOS *has arrived in Sparta. To the flourish of trumpets the* KING *enters a hall in the palace in state, followed by the* PRINCE, *leading in* CALANTHA, *and* ARMOSTES, CROTOLON, EUPHRANEA, CHRISTALLA, PHILEMA, *and* AMELUS.

[9] B, cry a Iealousie.

AMY. Cousin of Argos, what the heavens have pleased,
In their unchanging counsels, to conclude
For both our kingdoms' weal, we must submit to;
Nor can we be unthankful to their bounties,
Who, when we were even creeping to our grave,
Sent us a daughter, in whose birth our hope
Continues of succession. As you are
In title next, being grandchild to our aunt,
So we in heart desire you may sit nearest
Calantha's love; since we have ever vowed
Not to enforce affection by our will,
But by her own choice to confirm it gladly.
NEAR. You speak the nature of a right just father.
I come not hither roughly to demand
My cousin's thraldom, but to free mine own.
Report of great Calantha's beauty, virtue,
Sweetness, and singular perfections, courted
All ears to credit what I find was published
By constant truth; from which, if any service
Of my desert can purchase fair construction,
This lady must command it.
CAL. Princely sir,
So well you know how to profess observance,[10]
That you instruct your hearers to become
Practitioners in duty; of which number
I'll study to be chief.
NEAR. Chief, glorious virgin,
In my devotions, as in all men's wonder.
AMY. Excellent cousin, we deny no liberty;
Use thine own opportunities.—Armostes,
We must consult with the philosophers;
The business is of weight.
ARM. Sir, at your pleasure.

[10] courtship.

AMY. You told me, Crotolon, your son's returned
From Athens: wherefore comes he not to court,
As we commanded?
CROT. He shall soon attend
Your royal will, great sir.
AMY. The marriäge
Between young Prophilus and Euphranea
Tastes of too much delay.
CROT. My lord—
AMY. Some pleasures
At celebration of it would give life
To th' entertainment of the prince our kinsman;
Our court wears gravity more than we relish.
ARM. Yet the heavens smile on all your high attempts,
Without a cloud.
CROT. So may the gods protect us.
CAL., *answering a flattering speech by* NEARCHUS. A prince a subject?
NEAR. Yes, to beauty's sceptre;
As all hearts kneel, so mine.
CAL. You are too courtly.

Enter ITHOCLES, ORGILUS, *and* PROPHILUS. ORGILUS *has met the other two as he was about to seek the* KING'S *presence.*

ITH. <Your safe return to Sparta is most welcome:
I joy to meet you here, and, as occasion
Shall grant us privacy, will yield you reasons
Why I should covet to deserve the title
Of your respected friend; for, without compliment,
Believe it, Orgilus, 'tis my ambition.
ORG. Your lordship may command me, your poor servant.>
ITH., *seeing* CALANTHA *and* NEARCHUS *whispering together.* <So amorously close! so soon! my heart!>
PRO. <What sudden change is next?>
ITH. Life to the king!
To whom I here present this noble gentleman,
New come from Athens: royal sir, vouchsafe

Your gracious hand in favor of his merit.
[*The* King *gives* Orgilus *his hand to kiss.*
Croт. <My son preferred by Ithocles!>
Amy. Our bounties
Shall open to thee, Orgilus; for instance—
Hark in thine ear <if, out of those inventions
Which flow in Athens, thou hast there engrossed [11]
Some rarity of wit, to grace the nuptials
Of thy fair sister, and renown our court
In th' eyes of this young prince, we shall be debtor
To thy conceit: think on't.
Org. Your highness honors me.>
Near., *to* Calantha. My tongue and heart are twins.
Cal. A noble birth,
Becoming such a father.—Worthy Orgilus,
You are a guest most wished for.
Org. May my duty
Still rise in your opinion, sacred princess!
Ith. Euphranea's brother, sir; a gentleman
Well worthy of your knowledge.
Near. We embrace him,
Proud of so dear acquaintance.
Amy. All prepare
For revels and disport; the joys of Hymen,
Like Phoebus in his lustre, put to flight
All mists of dulness, crown the hours with gladness:
No sounds but music, no discourse but mirth!
Cal. Thine arm, I prithee, Ithocles.—[*To* Nearchus.] Nay, good
My lord, keep on your way; I am provided.
Near. I dare not disobey.
Ith. Most heavenly lady! [*Exeunt.*

Scene V

Crotolon *and* Orgilus *are alone in a room in the palace.*[12]

Croт. The king hath spoke his mind.
Org. His will he hath;
But were it lawful to hold plea against
The power of greatness, not the reason, haply
Such undershrubs as subjects sometimes might
Borrow of nature justice, to inform
That license sovereignty holds without check
Over a meek obedience.
Croт. How resolve you
Touching your sister's marriage? Prophilus
Is a deserving and a hopeful youth.
Org. I envy not his merit, but applaud it;
Could wish him thrift [13] in all his best desires,
And with a willingness inleague our blood
With his, for purchase of full growth in friendship.
He never touched on any wrong that maliced
The honor of our house nor stirred our peace:
Yet, with your favor, let me not forget
Under whose wing he gathers warmth and comfort,
Whose creature he is bound, made, and must live so.
Croт. Son, son, I find in thee a harsh condition; [14]
No courtesy can win it; 'tis too rancorous.
Org. Good sir, be not severe in your construction;
I am no stranger to such easy calms
As sit in tender bosoms: lordly Ithocles
Hath graced my entertainment in abundance,
Too humbly hath descended from that height
Of arrogance and spleen which wrought the rape
On grieved Penthea's purity; his scorn
Of my untoward fortunes is reclaimed
Unto a courtship, almost to a fawning.
I'll kiss his foot, since you will have it so.

[11] acquired.
[12] It is usually described as a room in the house of Crotolon.
[13] success. [14] nature.

CROT. Since I "will have it so"! Friend,
I will have it so,
Without our ruin by your politic plots,
Or wolf of hatred snarling in your breast.
You have a spirit, sir, have ye? A familiar
That posts i' th' air for your intelligence?
Some such hobgoblin hurried you from Athens,
For yet you come unsent for.
ORG. If unwelcome,
I might have found a grave there.
CROT. Sure, your business
Was soon dispatched, or your mind altered quickly.
ORG. 'Twas care, sir, of my health cut short my journey;
For there a general infectiön
Threatens a desolation.
CROT. And I fear
Thou hast brought back a worse infection with thee—
Infection of thy mind; which, as thou say'st,
Threatens the desolation of our family.
ORG. Forbid it, our dear genius! I will rather
Be made a sacrifice on Thrasus' monument,
Or kneel to Ithocles, his son, in dust,
Than woo a father's curse. My sister's marriage
With Prophilus is from my heart confirmed;
May I live hated, may I die despised,
If I omit to further it in all
That can concern me!
CROT. I have been too rough.
My duty to my king made me so earnest;
Excuse it, Orgilus.
ORG. Dear sir!
CROT. Here comes
Euphranea with Prophilus and Ithocles.

Enter PROPHILUS, EUPHRANEA, ITHOCLES, GRONEAS, *and* HEMOPHIL.

ORG. Most honored! ever famous!
ITH. Your true friend;
On earth not any truer. With smooth eyes
Look on this worthy couple; your consent
Can only make them one.
ORG. They have it.—Sister,
Thou pawn'dst to me an oath, of which engagement
I never will release thee, if thou aim'st
At any other choice than this.
EUPH. Dear brother,
At him, or none.
CROT. To which my blessing's added.
ORG. Which, till a greater ceremony perfect—
Euphranea, lend thy hand—here, take her, Prophilus;
Live long a happy man and wife; and, further,
That these in presence may conclude an omen,
Thus for a bridal song I close my wishes:
[*Sings.*]

Comforts lasting, loves increasing,
Like soft hours never ceasing:
Plenty's pleasure, peace complying,
Without jars, or tongues envýing;
Hearts by holy union wedded,
More than theirs by custom bedded;
Fruitful issues; life so graced,
Not by age to be defaced,
Budding, as the year ensu'th,
Every spring another youth:
All what thought can add beside
Crown this bridegroom and this bride!

PRO. You have sealed joy close to my soul.—Euphranea,
Now I may call thee mine.
ITH. I but exchange
One good friend for another.
ORG. If these gallants
Will please to grace a poor inventiön
By joining with me in some slight device,
I'll venture on a strain my younger days
Have studied for delight.
HEM. With thankful willingness
I offer my attendance.
GRO. No endeavor
Of mine shall fail to show itself.
ITH. We will
All join to wait on thy directions, Orgilus.
ORG. O, my good lord, your favors flow towards
A too unworthy worm; but as you please:
I am what you will shape me.

ITH. A fast friend
CROT. I thank thee, son, for this acknowledgment;
It is a sight of gladness.
ORG. But my duty.

SCENE VI

PENTHEA *has sought an interview with* CALANTHA *in the latter's apartment in the palace, and has obtained it.* CHRISTALLA *and* PHILEMA *are present.*

CAL. Whoe'er would speak with us, deny his entrance;
Be careful of our charge.
CHRIS. We shall, madam.
CAL. Except the king himself, give none admittance;
Not any.
PHIL. Madam, it shall be our care.
[*Exeunt* CHRISTALLA *and* PHILEMA.
CAL. Being alone, Penthea, you have granted
The opportunity you sought and might
At all times have commanded.
PEN. 'Tis a benefit
Which I shall owe your goodness even in death for.
My glass of life, sweet princess, hath few minutes
Remaining to run down; the sands are spent;
For by an inward messenger I feel
The summons of departure short and certain.
CAL. You feed too much your melancholy.
PEN. Glories
Of human greatness are but pleasing dreams
And shadows soon decaying: on the stage
Of my mortality my youth hath acted
Some scenes of vanity, drawn out at length
By varied pleasures, sweetened in the mixture,
But tragical in issue: beauty, pomp,
With every sensuality our giddiness
Doth frame an idol, are unconstant friends,
When any troubled passion makes assault
On the unguarded castle of the mind.
CAL. Contemn not your condition for the proof
Of bare opinion only: to what end
Reach all these moral texts?
PEN. To place before ye
A perfect mirror, wherein you may see
How weary I am of a lingering life,
Who count the best a misery.
CAL. Indeed
You have no little cause; yet none so great
As to distrust a remedy.
PEN. That remedy
Must be a winding-sheet, a fold of lead,
And some untrod-on corner in the earth.—
Not to detain your expectation, princess,
I have an humble suit.
CAL. Speak; I enjoy[15] it.
PEN. Vouchsafe, then, to be my executrix,
And take that trouble on ye to dispose
Such legacies as I bequeath, impartially.
I have not much to give; the pains are easy;
Heaven will reward your piety, and thank it
When I am dead; for sure I must not live;
I hope I cannot.
CAL. Now, beshrew thy sadness,
Thou turn'st me too much woman.
[*Weeps.*
PEN. <Her fair eyes
Melt into passion.> Then I have assurance
Encouraging my boldness. In this paper
My will was charactered; which you, with pardon,
Shall now know from mine own mouth.
CAL. Talk on, prithee;
It is a pretty earnest.
PEN. I have left me
But three poor jewels to bequeath. The first is
My youth; for, though I am much old in griefs,
In years I am a child.
CAL. To whom that [jewel]?
PEN. To virgin-wives, such as abuse not wedlock

[15] Dyce suggests "enjoin."

By freedom of desires, but covet chiefly
The pledges of chaste beds for ties of love,
Rather than ranging of their blood; and next
To married maids, such as prefer the number
Of honorable issue in their virtues
Before the flattery of delights by marriage:
May those be ever young!
CAL. A second jewel
You mean to part with?
PEN. 'Tis my fame, I trust
By scandal yet untouched: this I bequeath
To Memory, and Time's old daughter, Truth.
If ever my unhappy name find mention
When I am fall'n to dust, may it deserve
Beseeming charity without dishonor!
CAL. How handsomely thou play'st with harmless sport
Of mere imagination! Speak the last.
I strangely like thy will.
PEN. This jewel, madam,
Is dearly precious to me; you must use
The best of your discretion to employ
This gift as I intend it.
CAL. Do not doubt me.
PEN. 'Tis long agone since first I lost my heart;
Long I have lived without it, else for certain
I should have given that too; but, instead
Of it, to great Calantha, Sparta's heir,
By service bound and by affection vowed,
I do bequeath, in holiest rites of love,
Mine only brother, Ithocles.
CAL. What saidst thou?
PEN. Impute not, heaven-blest lady, to ambition
A faith as humbly perfect as the prayers
Of a devoted suppliant can endow it.
Look on him, princess, with an eye of pity;
How like the ghost of what he late appeared
'A moves before you.
CAL. Shall I answer here,
Or lend my ear too grossly?
PEN. First his heart
Shall fall in cinders, scorched by your disdain,
Ere he will dare, poor man, to ope an eye
On these divine looks, but with low-bent thoughts
Accusing such presumption; as for words,
'A dares not utter any but of service:
Yet this lost creature loves ye. Be a princess
In sweetness as in blood; give him his doom,
Or raise him up to comfort.
CAL. What new change
Appears in my behavior, that thou dar'st
Tempt my displeasure?
PEN. I must leave the world
To revel in Elysium, and 'tis just
To wish my brother some advantage here;
Yet, by my best hopes, Ithocles is ignorant
Of this pursuit. But if you please to kill him,
Lend him one angry look or one harsh word,
And you shall soon conclude how strong a power
Your absolute authority holds over
His life and end.
CAL. You have forgot, Penthea,
How still I have a father.
PEN. But remember
I am a sister, though to me this brother
Hath been, you know, unkind, O, most unkind!
CAL., *calling*. Christalla, Philema, where are ye?—Lady,
Your check lies in my silence.

Re-enter CHRISTALLA *and* PHILEMA.

CHRIS. AND PHIL. Madam, here.
CAL. I think ye sleep, ye drones: wait on Penthea
Unto her lodging. <Ithocles! Wronged lady!>
PEN. <My reckonings are made even; death or fate

Can now nor strike too soon nor force too late. [CHRISTALLA *and* PHILEMA *accompany* PENTHEA *out.*

ACT FOUR

SCENE I

ARMOSTES *is sounding* ITHOCLES, *having become suspicious that he entertains ambition. The scene is a chamber in the palace.*

ITH. Forbear your inquisition: curiosity
Is of too subtle and too searching nature,
In fears of love too quick, too slow of credit.—
I am not what you doubt me. [10
ARM. Nephew, be, then,
As I would wish.— <All is not right.> Good heaven
Confirm your resolutions for dependence
On worthy ends, which may advance your quiet!
ITH. I did the noble Orgilus much injury,
But grieved Penthea more: I now repent it; [20
Now, uncle, now; this "now" is now too late.
So provident is folly in sad issue,
That after-wit, like bankrupts' debts, stands tallied,
Without all possibilities of payment.
Sure, he's an honest, very honest gentleman;
A man of single meaning.
ARM. I believe it; [30
Yet, nephew, 'tis the tongue informs our ears;
Our eyes can never pierce into the thoughts,
For they are lodged too inward; but I question
No truth in Orgilus.—The princess, sir.
ITH. The princess! ha!
ARM. With her the Prince of Argos.

Enter NEARCHUS, *leading* CALANTHA; AMELUS, CHRISTALLA, *and* PHILEMA, *following.* [42

NEAR. Great fair one, grace my hopes with any instance
Of livery, from the allowance of your favor;
This little spark— [*Attempts to take ring from her finger.*
CAL. A toy!
NEAR. Love feasts on toys,
For Cupid is a child. Vouchsafe this [51 bounty:
It cannot be denied.
CAL. You shall not value,
Sweet cousin, at a price, what I count cheap;
So cheap, that let him take it who dares stoop for't,
And give it at next meeting to a mistress:
She'll thank him for't, perhaps. [*Casts the ring at the feet of* ITHOCLES, *who promptly picks it up.* [62
AME. The ring, sir, is
The princess's; I could have took it up.
ITH. Learn manners, prithee.—To the blessed owner,
Upon my knees— [*Kneels and offers it to* CALANTHA.
NEAR. Y'are saucy.
CAL. This is pretty!
I am, belike, "a mistress"—wondrous [71 pretty!
Let the man keep his fortune, since he found it;
He's worthy on't.—On, cousin! [NEARCHUS *and* CALANTHA *depart, followed by* CHRISTALLA *and* PHILEMA.
ITH., *to* AMELUS. Follow, spaniel;
I'll force ye to a fawning else. [80
AME. You dare not. [*Exit.*
ARM. My lord, you were too forward.
ITH. Look ye, uncle,
Some such there are whose liberal contents
Swarm without care in every sort of plenty;
Who after full repasts can lay them down
To sleep; and they sleep, uncle; in which silence [91
Their very dreams present 'em choice of pleasures,
Pleasures—observe me, uncle—of rare object;

Here heaps of gold, there increments of honors;
Now change of garments, then the votes of people;
Anon varieties of beauties, courting, [100
In flatteries of the night, exchange of dalliance;
Yet these are still but dreams. Give me felicity
Of which my senses waking are partakers,
A real, visible, material happiness;
And then, too, when I stagger in expectance [109
Of the least comfort that can cherish life.—
I saw it, sir, I saw it; for it came
From her own hand.
ARM. The princess threw it t'ye.
ITH. True; and she said—well I remember what—
Her cousin prince would beg it.
ARM. Yes, and parted
In anger at your taking on't. [119
ITH. <Penthea,
O, thou hast pleaded with a powerful language!
I want a fee to gratify thy merit;
But I will do—>
ARM. What is't you say?
ITH. "In anger"!
In anger let him part; for, could his breath,
Like whirlwinds, toss such servile slaves as lick [130
The dust his footsteps print into a vapor,
It durst not stir a hair of mine; it should not;
I'd rend it up by th' roots first. To be anything
Calantha smiles on is to be a blessing
More sacred than a petty prince of Argos
Can wish to equal, or in worth or title.
ARM. Contain yourself, my lord: Ixion, aiming [141
To embrace Juno, bosomed but a cloud,
And begat Centaurs; 'tis an useful moral.
Ambition hatched in clouds of mere opinion
Proves but in birth a prodigy.
ITH. I thank ye;
Yet, with your license, I should seem uncharitable [150
To gentler fate, if, relishing the dainties
Of a soul's settled peace, I were so feeble
Not to digest it.
ARM. He deserves small trust
Who is not privy-counsellor to himself.

Having disposed of the PRINCESS, NEARCHUS *returns with* AMELUS, *to tell* ITHOCLES *what he thinks of him. He is accompanied by* ORGILUS, *who, for his own purposes, is defending the object of their anger.* [161

NEAR. Brave me!
ORG. Your excellence mistakes his temper;
For Ithocles in fashion of his mind
Is beautiful, soft, gentle, the clear mirror
Of absolute perfection.
AME. Was't your modesty
Termed any of the prince's servants "spaniel"? [170
Your nurse, sure, taught you other language.
ITH. "Language"!
NEAR. A gallant man-at-arms is here, a doctor
In feats of chivalry, blunt and rough-spoken,
Vouchsafing not the fustian of civility,
Which [less] rash spirits style good manners! [180
ITH. "Manners"!
ORG. No more, illustrious sir; 'tis matchless Ithocles.
NEAR. You might have understood who I am.
ITH. Yes.
I did; else—but the presence calmed th' affront—
Y'are cousin to the princess. [189
NEAR. To the king too,
A certain instrument that lent support-ance
To your colossic greatness—to that king too,
You might have added.
ITH. There is more divinity

In beauty than in majesty.
ARM. O fie, fie!
NEAR. This odd youth's pride turns heretic in loyalty.
Sirrah! low mushrooms never rival cedars.
[*The* PRINCE *and his friend go out, leaving* ITHOCLES *momentarily speechless with rage. When he finds his voice again, he bursts out indignantly.*
ITH. Come back!—What pitiful dull thing am I
So to be tamely scolded at!—Come back!—
Let him come back, and echo once again
That scornful sound of "mushroom"! painted colts—
Like heralds' coats gilt o'er with crowns and sceptres—
May bait a muzzled lion.
ARM. Cousin, cousin,
Thy tongue is not thy friend.
ORG. In point of honor
Discretion knows no bounds. Amelus told me
'Twas all about a little ring.
ITH. A ring
The princess threw away, and I took up.
Admit she threw't to me, what arm of brass
Can snatch it hence? No; could he grind the hoop
To powder, 'a might sooner reach my heart
Than steal and wear one dust on't.—Orgilus,
I am extremely wronged.
ORG. A lady's favor
Is not to be so slighted.
ITH. "Slighted"!
ARM. Quiet
These vain unruly passions, which will render ye
Into a madness. Griefs will have their vent.

TECNICUS *enters. He has in his hand a scroll.*

ARM. Welcome! thou com'st in season, reverend man,
To pour the balsam of a supplying patience
Into the festering wound of ill-spent fury.
ORG. <What makes he here?>
TEC. The hurts are yet not[1] mortal,
Which shortly will prove deadly. To the king,
Armostes, see in safety thou deliver
This sealed-up counsel; bid him with a constancy
Peruse the secrets of the gods.—O Sparta,
O Lacedæmon! double-named, but one
In fate: when kingdoms reel—mark well my saw—
Their heads must needs be giddy. Tell the king
That henceforth he no more must inquire after
My agëd head; Apollo wills it so:
I am for Delphos.
ARM. Not without some conference
With our great master?
TEC. Never more to see him:
A greater prince commands me.—Ithocles,
"When youth is ripe, and age from time doth part,
The lifeless trunk shall wed the broken heart."
ITH. What's this, if understood?
TEC. List, Orgilus;
Remember what I told thee long before;
These tears shall be my witness.
ARM. 'Las, good man!
TEC. "Let craft with courtesy a while confer;
Revenge proves its own executioner."
ORG. Dark sentences are for Apollo's priests;
I am not Œdipus.
TEC. My hour is come;
Cheer up the king; farewell to all.—O Sparta,
O Lacedæmon! [*Exit.*
ARM. If prophetic fire
Have warmed this old man's bosom, we might construe
His words to fatal sense.
ITH. Leave to the powers
Above us the effects of their decrees;

[1] B, but.

My burthen lies within me: servile fears
Prevent no great effects.—Divine Calantha!
Arm. The gods be still propitious!
[*Exeunt* Ithocles *and* Armostes.
Org. Something oddly
The book-man prated, yet 'a talked it weeping;
"Let craft with courtesy a while confer;
Revenge proves its own executioner."
Con it again; for what? It shall not puzzle me;
'Tis dotage of a withered brain. Penthea
Forbade me not her presence; I may see her,
And gaze my fill. Why, see her, then, I may,
When, if I faint to speak, I must be silent.

Scene II

The repentant Bassanes *is in a room in his house, with* Grausis *and* Phulas. *His attitude has undergone a complete change.*

Bass. Pray, use your recreations; all the service
I will expect is quietness amongst ye;
Take liberty at home, abroad, at all times,
And in your charities appease the gods,
Whom I, with my distractions, have offended.
Grau. Fair blessings on thy heart!
Phu. <Here's a rare change!
My lord, to cure the itch, is surely gelded;
The cuckold in conceit hath cast his horns.>
Bass. Betake ye to your several occasions;
And, wherein I have heretofore been faulty,
Let your constructions mildly pass it over.
Henceforth I'll study reformation—more I have not for employment.
Grau. O, sweet man!
Thou art the very "Honeycomb of Honesty."
Phu. The "Garland of Good-will."—Old lady, hold up
Thy reverend snout, and trot behind me softly,
As it becomes a moil of ancient carriage.
[*Obediently the old dame follows him out.*
Bass. Beasts, only capable of sense, enjoy
The benefit of food and ease with thankfulness;
Such silly creatures, with a grudging, kick not
Against the portion nature hath bestowed;
But men, endowed with reason and the use
Of reason, to distinguish from the chaff
Of abject scarcity the quintessence,
Soul, and elixir of the earth's abundance,
The treasures of the sea, the air, nay, heaven,
Repining at these glories of creation,
Are verier beasts than beasts; and of those beasts
The worst am I: I, who was made a monarch
Of what a heart could wish for, a chaste wife,
Endeavored what in me lay to pull down
That temple built for adoration only,
And level't in the dust of causeless scandal;
But, to redeem a sacrilege so impious,
Humility shall pour, before the deities
I have incensed, a largess of more patience
Than their displeasëd altars can require:
No tempests of commotion shall disquiet
The calms of my composure.

Enter Orgilus.

Org. I have found thee,
Thou patron of more horrors than the bulk
Of manhood, hooped about with ribs of iron,
Can cram within thy breast: Penthea, Bassanes,
Curst by thy jealousies—more, by thy dotage—
Is left a prey to words.[2]

[2] There is probably something wrong or something wanting here.

Bass. Exercise
Your trials for addition to my penance;
I am resolved. [81
Org. Play not with misery
Past cure: some angry minister of fate hath
Deposed the empress of her soul, her reason,
From its most proper throne; but, what's the miracle
More new, I, I have seen it, and yet live!
Bass. You may delude my senses, not my judgment; [91
'Tis anchored into a firm resolution;
Dalliance of mirth or wit can ne'er unfix it:
Practise yet further.
Org. May thy death of love to her
Damn all thy comforts to a lasting fast
From every joy of life! Thou barren rock,
By thee we have been split in ken of harbor. [101

Penthea *enters, accompanied by* Ithocles, Armostes, Christalla, *and* Philema. *Her dementia is indicated by the fact that her hair hangs loose about her ears and shoulders.*

Ith. Sister, look up; your Ithocles, your brother,
Speaks t'ye; why do you weep? Dear, turn not from me.— [110
Here is a killing sight; lo, Bassanes,
A lamentable object!
Org. Man, dost see't?
Sports are more gamesome; am I yet in merriment?
Why dost not laugh?
Bass. Divine and best of ladies,
Please to forget my outrage; mercy ever
Cannot but lodge under a roof so excellent. [120
I have cast off that cruelty of frenzy
Which once appeared imposture, and then juggled
To cheat my sleeps of rest.
Org. Was I in earnest?
Pen. Sure, if we were all Sirens, we should sing pitifully;
And 'twere a comely music, when in parts
One sung another's knell. The turtle sighs [131
When he hath lost his mate; and yet some say
He must be dead first. 'Tis a fine deceit
To pass away in a dream; indeed, I've slept
With mine eyes open a great while. No falsehood
Equals a broken faith; there's not a hair
Sticks on my head, but, like a leaden plummet, [141
It sinks me to the grave. I must creep thither;
The journey is not long.
Ith. But, thou, Penthea,
Hast many years, I hope, to number yet,
Ere thou canst travel that way.
Bass. Let the sun first
Be wrapped up in an everlasting darkness, [150
Before the light of nature, chiefly formed
For the whole world's delight, feel an eclipse
So universal!
Org. Wisdom, look ye, begins
To rave!—Art thou mad too, antiquity?
Pen. Since I was first a wife, I might have been
Mother to many pretty prattling babes;
They would have smiled when I smiled, and for certain [161
I should have cried when they cried.—Truly, brother,
My father would have picked me out a husband,
And then my little ones had been no bastards;
But 'tis too late for me to marry now:
I am past child-bearing; 'tis not my fault. [170
Bass. Fall on me, if there be a burning Aetna,
And bury me in flames! Sweats hot as sulphur
Boil through my pores! Affliction hath in store
No torture like to this.
Org. Behold a patience!—
Lay by thy whining gray dissimulation,

Do something worth a chronicle; show justice [181
Upon the author of this mischief; dig out
The jealousies that hatched this thraldom first
With thine own poniard. Every antic rapture
Can roar as thine does.
ITH. Orgilus, forbear.
BASS. Disturb him not; it is a talking motion[3] [191
Provided for my torment. What a fool am I
To bandy passion! Ere I'll speak a word,
I will look on and burst.
PEN., *to* ORGILUS. I loved you once.
ORG. Thou didst, wronged creature: in despite of malice,
For it love thee ever. [200
PEN. Spare your hand;
Believe me, I'll not hurt it.
ORG. Pain my heart too.
PEN. Complain not though I wring it hard. I'll kiss it;
O, 'tis a fine soft palm!—hark, in thine ear;
Like whom do I look, prithee?—Nay, no whispering.
Goodness! we had been happy; too much happiness [211
Will make folk proud, they say. But [*pointing at* ITHOCLES] that is he—
And yet he paid for't home; alas, his heart
Is crept into the cabinet of the princess.
We shall have points and bride-laces. Remember,
When we last gathered roses in the garden, [221
I found my wits; but truly you lost yours.
[*Again pointing at* ITHOCLES.] That's he; and still 'tis he.
ITH. Poor soul, how idly
Her fancies guide her tongue!
BASS. <Keep in, vexation,
And break not into clamor.> [229

[3] marionette.

ORG. <She has tutored me:
Some powerful inspiration checks my laziness.>
Now let me kiss your hand, grieved beauty.
PEN. Kiss it.—
Alack, alack, his lips be wondrous cold!
Dear soul, 'has lost his color: have ye seen
A straying heart? All crannies! every drop [240
Of blood is turnëd to an amethyst,
Which married bachelors hang in their ears.
ORG. Peace usher her into Elysium!
<If this be madness, madness is an oracle.> [*Exit.*
ITH. Christalla, Philema, when slept my sister,
Her ravings are so wild? [249
CHRIS. Sir, not these ten days.
PHIL. We watch by her continually; besides,
We can not any way pray her to eat.
BASS. O, misery of miseries!
PEN. Take comfort;
You may live well and die a good old man.
By yea and nay, an oath not to be broken,
If you had joined our hands once in the temple— [261
'Twas since my father died, for had he lived
He would have done't—I must have called you father.—
O, my wracked honor! ruined by those tyrants,
A cruel brother and a desperate dotage!
There is no peace left for a ravished wife [270
Widowed by lawless marriage; to all memory
Penthea's, poor Penthea's name is strumpeted:
But, since her blood was seasoned by the forfeit
Of noble shame with mixtures of pollution,
Her blood—'tis just—be henceforth never heightened [280

With taste of sustenance! Starve; let that fulness
Whose pleurisy hath fevered faith and modesty—
Forgive me; O, I faint! [*Falls into the arms of her Attendants.*
ARM. Be not so wilful,
Sweet niece, to work thine own destruction. [289
ITH. Nature
Will call her daughter monster!—What! not eat?
Refuse the only ordinary means
Which are ordained for life? Be not, my sister,
A murderess to thyself.—Hear'st thou this, Bassanes?
BASS. Foh! I am busy, for I have not thoughts [299
Enow to think: all shall be well anon.
'Tis tumbling in my head; there is a mastery
In art to fatten and keep smooth the outside;
Yes, and to comfort up the vital spirits
Without the help of food, fumes or perfumes,
Perfumes or fumes. Let her alone; I'll search out
The trick on't. [310
PEN. Lead me gently; heavens reward ye.
Griefs are sure friends; they leave without control
Nor cure nor comforts for a leprous soul.
[*She is led out by* CHRISTALLA *and* PHILEMA.
BASS. I grant ye; and will put in practice instantly
What you shall still admire: 'tis wonderful; [321
'Tis super-singular, not to be matched;
Yet, when I've done't, I've done't: ye shall all thank me. [*Exit.*
ARM. The sight is full of terror.
ITH. On my soul
Lies such an infinite clog of massy dulness
As that I have not sense enough to feel it.— [330
See, uncle, th' angry thing returns again:
Shall's welcome him with thunder? We are haunted,
And must use exorcism to conjure down
This spirit of malevolence.
ARM. Mildly, nephew.

But NEARCHUS, *who enters now with* ARMOSTES, *has lost his anger, and comes in a chastened mood.* [339

NEAR. I come not, sir, to chide your late disorder,
Admitting that th' inurement to a roughness
In soldiers of your years and fortunes, chiefly,
So lately prosperous, hath not yet shook off
The custom of the war in hours of leisure; [349
Nor shall you need excuse, since y'are to render
Account to that fair excellence, the princess,
Who in her private gallery expects it
From your own mouth alone: I am a messenger
But to her pleasure.
ITH. Excellent Nearchus,
Be prince still of my services, and conquer [360
Without the combat of dispute; I honor ye.
NEAR. The king is on a sudden indisposed,
Physiciäns are called for; 'twere fit, Armostes,
You should be near him.
ARM. Sir, I kiss your hands.
[*Exeunt* ITHOCLES *and* ARMOSTES.
NEAR. Amelus, I perceive Calantha's bosom [371
Is warmed with other fires than such as can
Take strength from any fuel of the love
I might address to her. Young Ithocles,
Or ever I mistake, is lord ascendant
Of her devotions; one, to speak him truly,
In every disposition nobly fashioned.
AME. But can your highness brook to be so rivalled, [380

Considering the inequality of the persons?
NEAR. I can, Amelus; for affections injured
By tyranny or rigor of compulsion,
Like tempest-threatened trees unfirmly rooted,
Ne'er spring to timely growth: observe, for instance, [389
Life-spent Penthea and unhappy Orgilus.
AME. How does your grace determine?
NEAR. To be jealous
In public of what privately I'll further;
And, though they shall not know, yet they shall find it.

SCENE III

The KING *is approaching his end. He is supported into one of the rooms of the palace by* HEMOPHIL *and* GRONEAS, *who place him in a chair. They are followed by* ARMOSTES *(who is carrying a box),* CROTOLON, *and* PROPHILUS.

AMY. Our daughter is not near?
ARM. She is retired, sir,
Into her gallery.
AMY. Where's the prince our cousin? [10
PRO. New walked into the grove, my lord.
AMY. All leave us
Except Armostes, and you, Crotolon;
We would be private.
PRO. Health unto your majesty!
[*Exeunt* PROPHILUS, HEMOPHIL, *and* GRONEAS.
AMY. What! Tecnicus is gone? [19
ARM. He is to Delphos;
And to your royal hands presents this box.
AMY. Unseal it, good Armostes; therein lie
The secrets of the oracle; out with it:
[ARMOSTES *takes out the scroll.*
Apollo live our patron! Read, Armostes.
ARM. "The plot in which the vine takes root [30
Begins to dry from head to foot;
The stock soon withering, want of sap
Doth cause to quail the budding grape;
But from the neighboring elm a dew
Shall drop, and feed the plot anew."
AMY. That is the oracle: what exposition
Makes the philosopher?
ARM. This brief one only.
"The plot is Sparta, the dried vine the king; [41
The quailing grape his daughter; but the thing
Of most importance, not to be revealed,
Is a near prince, the elm: the rest concealed. TECNICUS."
AMY. Enough; although the opening of this riddle
Be but itself a riddle, yet we construe
How near our laboring age draws to [50
a rest.
But must Calantha quail too? that young grape
Untimely budded! I could mourn for her;
Her tenderness hath yet deserved no rigor,
So to be crossed by fate.
ARM. You misapply, sir— [59
With favor let me speak it—what Apollo
Hath clouded in hid sense. I here conjecture
Her marriage with some neighboring prince, the dew
Of which befriending elm shall ever strengthen
Your subjects with a sovereignty of power.
CROT. Besides, most gracious lord, the pith of oracles [70
Is to be then digested when th' events
Expound their truth, not brought as soon to light
As uttered. Truth is child of Time; and herein
I find no scruple, rather cause of comfort,
With unity of kingdoms.
AMY. May it prove so,
For weal of this dear nation!—Where is Ithocles?— [80
Armostes, Crotolon, when this withered vine
Of my frail carcass on the funeral pile
Is fired into its ashes, let that young man

Be hedged about still with your cares and loves.
Much owe I to his worth, much to his service.—
Let such as wait come in now.
ARM., *going to the door.* All attend here!

In answer to the summons, CALANTHA, ITHOCLES, PROPHILUS, ORGILUS, EUPHRANEA, HEMOPHIL, *and* GRONEAS *enter.*

CAL. Dear sir! king! father!
ITH. O my royal master!
AMY. Cleave not my heart, sweet twins of my life's solace,
With your forejudging fears; there is no physic
So cunningly restorative to cherish
The fall of age, or call back youth and vigor,
As your consents in duty. I will shake off
This languishing disease of time, to quicken
Fresh pleasures in these drooping hours of sadness.
Is fair Euphranea married yet to Prophilus?
CROT. This morning, gracious lord.
ORG. This very morning;
Which, with your highness' leave, you may observe too.
Our sister looks, methinks, mirthful and sprightly,
As if her chaster fancy could already
Expound the riddle of her gain in losing
A trifle maids know only that they know not.
Pish! prithee, blush not; 'tis but honest change
Of fashion in the garment, loose for strait,
And so the modest maid is made a wife.
Shrewd business—is't not, sister?
EUPH. You are pleasant.
AMY. We thank thee, Orgilus; this mirth becomes thee.
But wherefore sits the court in such a silence?
A wedding without revels is not seemly.
CAL. Your late indisposition, sir, forbade it.
AMY. Be it thy charge, Calantha, to set forward
The bridal sports, to which I will be present;
If not, at least consenting.—Mine own Ithocles,
I have done little for thee yet.
ITH. Y'have built me
To the full height I stand in.
CAL. <Now or never!>
May I propose a suit?
AMY. Demand, and have it.
CAL. Pray, sir, give me this young man, and no further
Account him yours than he deserves in all things
To be thought worthy mine: I will esteem him
According to his merit.
AMY. Still thou'rt my daughter,
Still grow'st upon my heart.—[*To* ITHOCLES.] Give me thine hand.—
Calantha, take thine own: in noble actions
Thou'lt find him firm and absolute.—I would not
Have parted with thee, Ithocles, to any
But to a mistress who is all what I am.
ITH. A change, great king, most wished for, 'cause the same.
CAL., *to* ITHOCLES. <Th'art mine. Have I now kept my word?
ITH. Divinely.>
ORG. Rich fortunes guard, the favor of a princess
Rock thee, brave man, in ever-crownëd plenty!
Y'are minion[4] of the time; be thankful for it.
<Ho! here's a swing in destiny, apparent!
The youth is up on tiptoe, yet may stumble.>
AMY. On to your recreations.—Now convey me
Unto my bed-chamber: none on his forehead
Wear a distempered look.
ALL. The gods preserve ye!
CAL., *to* ITHOCLES. <Sweet, be not from my sight.

[4] the darling.

ITH. My whole felicity! >
[*The* KING *is carried out.* ORGILUS *and* ITHOCLES *are left alone, the latter being stopped by* ORGILUS *as he is about to accompany the others.*
ORG. Shall I be bold, my lord? [191
ITH. Thou canst not, Orgilus.
Call me thine own; for Prophilus must henceforth
Be all thy sister's: friendship, though it cease not
In marriage, yet is oft at less command
Than when a single freedom can dispose it.
ORG. Most right, my most good lord, my most great lord, [201
My gracious princely lord; I might add royal.
ITH. Royal! A subject royal?
ORG. Why not, pray, sir?
The sovereignty of kingdoms in their nonage
Stooped to desert, not birth; there's as much merit [209
In clearness of affection as in puddle
Of generation: you have conquered love
Even in the loveliest; if I greatly err not,
The son of Venus hath bequeathed his quiver
To Ithocles his manage, by whose arrows
Calantha's breast is opened.
ITH. Can't be possible?
ORG. I was myself a piece of suitor once,
And forward in preferment too; so forward [221
That, speaking truth, I may without offence, sir,
Presume to whisper that my hopes, and —hark ye—
My certainty of marriage stood assured
With as firm footing—by your leave—as any's
Now at this very instant; but—
ITH. 'Tis granted; [230
And, for a league of privacy between us,
Read o'er my bosom and partake a secret;
The princess is contracted mine.
ORG. Still, why not?
I now applaud her wisdom: when your kingdom
Stands seated in your will, secure and settled,
I dare pronounce you will be a just monarch; [241
Greece must admire and tremble.
ITH. Then the sweetness
Of so imparadised a comfort, Orgilus!
It is to banquet with the gods.
ORG. The glory
Of numerous children, potency of nobles,
Bent knees, hearts paved to tread on!
ITH. With a friendship
So dear, so fast as thine. [250
ORG. I am unfitting
For office; but for service—
ITH. We'll distinguish
Our fortunes merely in the title; partners
In all respects else but the bed.
ORG. The bed!
Forfend it Jove's own jealousy!—till lastly
We slip down in the common earth together, [261
And there our beds are equal; save some monument
To show this was the king, and this the subject.— [*Soft, sad music.*
List, what sad sounds are these, extremely sad ones?
ITH. Sure, from Penthea's lodgings.
ORG. Hark! a voice too.

A SONG, *within.* [270

O, no more, no more, too late
Sighs are spent; the burning tapers
Of a life as chaste as fate,
Pure as are unwritten papers,
Are burnt out: no heat, no light
Now remains; 'tis ever night.

Love is dead; let lovers' eyes,
Locked in endless dreams,
Th' extremes of all extremes,
Ope no more, for now Love dies; [280
Now Love dies, implying
Love's martyrs must be ever, ever dying.

ITH. O, my misgiving heart!
ORG. A horrid stillness
Succeeds this deathful air; let's know the reason;

Tread softly; there is mystery in mourning. [*Exeunt.*

Scene IV

In her apartment in the palace, the dead Penthea, *veiled, sits in a chair,* Christalla *and* Philema *at her feet, mourning. Two* Servants *enter with chairs, one of which is placed on each side of the dead woman. One of these two chairs has movable arms, which close on anyone sitting in it. This has been provided by the foresight of the unforgiving* Orgilus. *As the two* Servants *are going out, they meet* Ithocles *and* Orgilus, *entering.* [12

1 Ser., *to* Orgilus. <'Tis done; that on her right hand.

Org. Good! begone.> [*Exeunt* Servants.

Ith. Soft peace enrich this room!

Org. How fares the lady?

Phil. Dead!

Chris. Dead! [20

Phil. Starved!

Chris. Starved!

Ith. Me miserable!

Org. Tell us
How parted she from life?

Phil. She called for music,
And begged some gentle voice to tune a farewell
To life and griefs: Christalla touched the lute; [30
I wept the funeral song.

Chris. Which scarce was ended
But her last breath sealed up these hollow sounds,
"O, cruel Ithocles and injured Orgilus!"
So down she drew her veil, so died.

Ith. So died!

Org. Up! you are messengers of death; go from us;
Here's woe enough to court without a prompter: [41
Away; and—hark ye—till you see us next,
No syllable that she is dead.—Away;
Keep a smooth brow. [*Exeunt* Christalla *and* Philema.
My lord,—

Ith. Mine only sister!
Another is not left me.

Org. Take that chair;
I'll seat me here in this: between us sits [50
The object of our sorrows; some few tears
We'll part among us: I perhaps can mix
One lamentable story to prepare 'em.—
There, there; sit there, my lord.

Ith. Yes, as you please.
[Ithocles *sits in the chair indicated to him, and its arms close upon him.*
What means this treachery? [59

Org. Caught! you are caught,
Young master; 'tis thy throne of coronation,
Thou fool of greatness! See, I take this veil off;
Survey a beauty withered by the flames
Of an insulting Phaëton, her brother.

Ith. Thou mean'st to kill me basely?

Org. I foreknew
The last act of her life, and trained thee hither [70
To sacrifice a tyrant to a turtle.
You dreamt of kingdoms, did ye? How to bosom
The delicacies of a youngling princess;
How with this nod to grace that subtle courtier,
How with that frown to make this noble tremble,
And so forth; whiles Penthea's groans and tortures, [80
Her agonies, her miseries, afflictions,
Ne'er touched upon your thought: as for my injuries,
Alas, they were beneath your royal pity;
But yet they lived, thou proud man, to confound thee.
Behold thy fate; this steel! [*Draws a dagger.*

Ith. Strike home! A courage
As keen as thy revenge shall give it welcome: [91
But prithee faint not; if the wound close up,
Tent[5] it with double force, and search it deeply.
Thou look'st that I should whine and beg compassion,

[5] probe.

As loth to leave the vainness of my glories:
A statelier resolution arms my confidence,
To cozen thee of honor; neither could I
With equal trial of unequal fortune
By hazard of a duel; 'twere a bravery
Too mighty for a slave intending murder.
On to the execution, and inherit
A conflict with thy horrors.
ORG. By Apollo,
Thou talk'st a goodly language! for requital
I will report thee to thy mistress richly.
And take this peace along: some few short minutes
Determined, my resolves shall quickly follow
Thy wrathful ghost; then, if we tug for mastery,
Penthea's sacred eyes shall lend new courage.
Give me thy hand: be healthful in thy parting
From lost mortality! thus, thus I free it.
[*Stabs him.*
ITH. Yet,[6] yet, I scorn to shrink.
ORG. Keep up thy spirit:
I will be gentle even in blood; to linger
Pain, which I strive to cure, were to be cruel.
[*Stabs him again.*
ITH. Nimble in vengeance, I forgive thee. Follow
Safety, with best success: O, may it prosper!—
Penthea, by thy side thy brother bleeds;
The earnest of his wrongs to thy forced faith.
Thoughts of ambition, or delicious banquet
With beauty, youth, and love, together perish
In my last breath, which on the sacred altar
Of a long-looked-for peace—now—moves to heaven.
[*Dies.*
ORG. Farewell, fair spring of manhood! Henceforth welcome
Best expectation of a noble suff'rance.
I'll lock the bodies safe, till what must follow
Shall be approved.—Sweet twins, shine stars for ever!—
In vain they build their hopes whose life is shame:
No monument lasts but a happy name.

[6] again.

ACT V

SCENE I

BASSSANES *is alone in a room in his house. Not knowing of the death of* PENTHEA, *he has taken what steps seemed best to him for her cure.*

BASS. Athens—to Athens I have sent, the nursery
Of Greece for learning, and the fount of knowledge;
For here in Sparta there's not left amongst us
One wise man to direct; we're all turned madcaps.
'Tis said Apollo is the god of herbs,
Then certainly he knows the virtue of 'em:
To Delphos I have sent too. If there can be
A help for nature, we are sure yet.

Enter ORGILUS, *whose attitude towards* BASSANES *is changed by circumstances. The attitude of* BASSANES *towards him, however, remains unaltered.*

ORG. Honor
Attend thy counsels ever!
BASS. I beseech thee
With all my heart, let me go from thee quietly;
I will not aught to do with thee, of all men.
The doubles[1] of a hare, or, in a morning,
Salutes from a splay-footed witch, to drop
Three drops of blood at th' nose just and no more,
Croaking of ravens, or the screech of owls,
Are not so boding mischief as thy crossing

[1] Q, doublers.

My private meditations. Shun me, prithee;
And, if I cannot love thee heartily,
I'll love thee as well as I can.
ORG. Noble Bassanes,
Mistake me not.
BASS. Phew! then we shall be troubled.
Thou wert ordained my plague: heaven make me thankful,
And give me patience too, heaven, I beseech thee.
ORG. Accept a league of amity; for henceforth,
I vow, by my best genius, in a syllable,
Never to speak vexation. I will study
Service and friendship, with a zealous sorrow
For my past incivility towards ye.
BASS. Hey-day, good words, good words! I must believe 'em,
And be a coxcomb for my labor.
ORG. Use not
So hard a language; your misdoubt is causeless.
For instance, if you promise to put on
A constancy of patience, such a patience
As chronicle or history ne'er mentioned,
As follows not example, but shall stand
A wonder and a theme for imitation,
The first, the index pointing to a second,
I will acquaint ye with an unmatched secret,
Whose knowledge to your griefs shall set a period.
BASS. Thou canst not, Orgilus; 'tis in the power
Of the gods only: yet, for satisfaction,
Because I note an earnest in thine utterance,
Unforced and naturally free, be resolute:
The virgin-bays shall not withstand the lightning
With a more careless danger than my constancy
The full of thy relation. Could it move
Distraction in a senseless marble statue,
It should find me a rock: I do expect now
Some truth of unheard moment.
ORG. To your patience
You must add privacy, as strong in silence
As mysteries locked up in Jove's own bosom.
BASS. A skull hid in the earth a treble age
Shall sooner prate.
ORG. Lastly, to such direction
As the severity of a glorious action
Deserves to lead your wisdom and your judgment,
You ought to yield obedience.
BASS. With assurance
Of will and thankfulness.
ORG. With manly courage
Please, then, to follow me.
BASS. Where'er, I fear not.
[*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

The revels that have been arranged are to take place in a state room of the palace. The musicians do their duty; then EUPHRANEA, *the bride, enters, led by* GRONEAS *and* HEMOPHIL, *followed by* PROPHILUS, *led by* CHRISTALLA *and* PHILEMA. *After them come* CALANTHA, *leaning on the arm of* NEARCHUS; *and behind them,* CROTOLON *and* AMELUS. *The music ceases, and the procession halts.*

CAL. We miss our servant Ithocles and Orgilus;
On whom attend they?
CROT. My son, gracious princess,
Whispered some new device, to which these revels
Should be but usher: wherein I conceive
Lord Ithocles and himself are actors.
CAL. A fair excuse for absence: as for Bassanes,
Delights to him are troublesome: Armostes
Is with the king?
CROT. He is.
CAL. On to the dance!—
Dear cousin, hand you the bride; the bridegroom must be
Intrusted to my courtship. Be not jealous,
Euphranea; I shall scarcely prove a temptress.—

Fall to our dance. [NEARCHUS *dances with* EUPHRANEA, PROPHILUS *with* CALANTHA, CHRISTALLA *with* HEMOPHIL, PHILEMA *with* GRONEAS.

While they are dancing, ARMOSTES *enters. He goes to* CALANTHA *at the first change, and stoops to her ear.* [40

ARM. <The king your father's dead.>

CAL. To the other change.

ARM. <Is't possible?> [*They dance again.*

Enter BASSANES.

BASS., *to* CALANTHA, *at the second change.* <O, madam! Penthea, poor Penthea's starved.>

CAL. Beshrew thee!— [50 Lead to the next.

BASS. <Amazement dulls my senses.> [*They dance again.*

Enter ORGILUS.

ORG., *to* CALANTHA, *at the third change.* <Brave Ithocles is murdered, murdered cruelly.>

CAL. How dull this music sounds! Strike up more sprightly; [60 Our footings are not active like our heart, Which treads the nimbler measure.

ORG. <I am thunderstruck.>

[*The dancers tread the fourth and final measure. Then the music ceases.*

CAL. So! let us breathe awhile. Hath not this motion Raised fresher color on our cheeks?

NEAR. Sweet princess, A perfect purity of blood enamels [70 The beauty of your white.

CAL. We all look cheerfully; And, cousin, 'tis, methinks, a rare presumption In any who prefer our lawful pleasures Before their own sour censure, t' interrupt The custom of this ceremony bluntly.

NEAR. None dares, lady.

CAL. Yes, yes, some hollow voice delivered to me [81 How that the king was dead.

ARM. The king is dead: That fatal news was mine; for in mine arms He breathed his last, and with his crown bequeathed ye Your mother's wedding ring, which here I tender.

CROT. Most strange! [90

CAL. Peace crown his ashes! We are queen, then.

NEAR. Long live Calantha, Sparta's sovereign queen!

ALL. Long live the queen!

CAL. What whispered Bassanes?

BASS. That my Penthea, miserable soul, Was starved to death. [99

CAL. She's happy; she hath finished A long and painful progress.—A third murmur Pierced mine unwilling ears.

ORG. That Ithocles Was murdered—rather, butchered, had not bravery Of an undaunted spirit, conquering terror, Proclaimed his last act triumph over ruin.

ARM. How! murdered! [110

CAL. By whose hand?

ORG. By mine; this weapon Was instrument to my revenge: the reasons Are just and known; quit him of these, and then Never lived gentleman of greater merit, Hope or abiliment[2] to steer a kingdom.

CROT. Fie, Orgilus!

EUPH. Fie, brother! [120

CAL. You have done it?

BASS. How it was done let him report, the forfeit Of whose allegiance to our laws doth covet Rigor of justice; but that done it is, Mine eyes have been an evidence of credit Too sure to be convinced.[3] Armostes, rent not Thine arteries with hearing the bare circumstances [131

[2] ability. [3] confuted.

Of these calamities; thou'st lost a nephew,
A niece, and I a wife: continue man still;
Make me the pattern of digesting evils,
Who can outlive my mighty ones, not shrinking
At such a pressure as would sink a soul
Into what's most of death, the worst of horrors.
But I have sealed a covenant with sadness,
And entered into bonds without condition,
To stand these tempests calmly. Mark me, nobles,
I do not shed a tear, not for Penthea!
Excellent[4] misery!
CAL. We begin our reign
With a first act of justice: thy confession,
Unhappy Orgilus, dooms thee a sentence;
But yet thy father's or thy sister's presence
Shall be excused.—Give, Crotolon, a blessing
To thy lost son.—Euphranea, take a farewell;—
And both be gone.
CROT., *to* ORGILUS. Confirm thee, noble sorrow,
In worthy resolution!
EUPH. Could my tears speak,
My griefs were slight.
ORG. All goodness dwell amongst ye!
Enjoy my sister, Prophilus: my vengeance
Aimed never at thy prejudice.
CAL. Now withdraw.
[*Exeunt* CROTOLON, PROPHILUS, *and* EUPHRANEA.
Bloody relater of thy stains in blood—
For that thou hast reported him whose fortunes
And life by thee are both at once snatched from him,
With honorable mention—make thy choice
Of what death likes thee best; there's all our bounty.—
But, to excuse delays, let me, dear cousin,
Intreat you and these lords see execution
Instant before ye part.
NEAR. Your will commands us.
ORG. One suit, just queen, my last: vouchsafe your clemency,
That by no common hand I be divided
From this my humble frailty.
CAL. To their wisdoms
Who are to be spectators of thine end
I make the reference. Those that are dead
Are dead; had they not now died, of necessity
They must have paid the debt they owed to nature
One time or other.—Use dispatch, my lords;
We'll suddenly prepare our coronation.
[*Exeunt* CALANTHA, PHILEMA, *and* CHRISTALLA.
ARM. 'Tis strange these tragedies should never touch on
Her female pity.
BASS. She has a masculine spirit:
And wherefore should I pule, and, like like a girl,
Put finger in the eye? Let's be all toughness,
Without distinction betwixt sex and sex.
NEAR. Now, Orgilus, thy choice?
ORG. To bleed to death.
ARM. The executioner?
ORG. Myself, no surgeon;
I am well skilled in letting blood. Bind fast
This arm, that so the pipes may from their conduits
Convey a full stream; here's a skilful instrument. [*Shows his dagger.*
Only I am a beggar to some charity
To speed me in this execution
By lending th' other prick to th' t'other arm,
When this is bubbling life out.
BASS. I am for ye;
It most concerns my art, my care, my credit.—
Quick, fillet both his arms.
ORG. Gramercy, friendship!

[4] surpassing.

Such courtesies are real which flow cheerfully
Without an expectation of requital.
Reach me a staff in this hand. [*They give him a staff.*] —If a proneness
Or custom in my nature from my cradle
Had been inclined to fierce and eager bloodshed, [239
A coward guilt, hid in a coward quaking,
Would have betrayed fame to ignoble flight
And vagabond pursuit of dreadful safety;
But look upon my steadiness, and scorn not
The sickness of my fortune, which, since Bassanes
Was husband to Penthea, had lain bedrid.
We trifle time in words:—thus I [250 show cunning
In opening of a vein too full, too lively.
[*Pierces the vein with his dagger.*
ARM. Desperate courage!
ORG.[5] Honorable infamy!
HEM. I tremble at the sight.
GRO. Would I were loose!
BASS. It sparkles like a lusty wine new broached;
The vessel must be sound from which it issues.— [261
Grasp hard this other stick: I'll be as nimble;
But prithee, look not pale, have at ye! stretch out
Thine arm with vigor and [with] unshook virtue. [*Opens the vein.*
Good! O, I envy not a rival, fitted
To conquer in extremities. This pastime
Appears majestical; some high-tuned [270 poem
Hereafter shall deliver to posterity
The writer's glory and his subject's triumph.
How is't, man? Droop not yet.
ORG. I feel no palsies.
On a pair-royal do I wait in death:
My sovereign, as his liegeman; on my mistress, [279
As a devoted servant; and on Ithocles,
As if no brave, yet no unworthy enemy.
Nor did I use an engine to entrap
His life, out of a slavish fear to combat
Youth, strength, or cunning;[6] but for that I durst not
Engage the goodness of a cause on fortune,
By which his name might have outfaced my vengeance.— [289
O, Tecnicus, inspired with Phœbus' fire!
I call to mind thy augury, 'twas perfect;
"Revenge proves its own executioner."
When feeble man is bending to his mother,
The dust 'a was first framed on, thus he totters.
BASS. Life's fountain is dried up.
ORG. So falls the standard
Of my prerogative in being a creature!
A mist hangs o'er mine eyes, the sun's bright splendor [301
Is clouded in an everlasting shadow;
Welcome, thou ice, that sitt'st about my heart;
No heat can ever thaw thee. [*Dies.*
NEAR. Speech hath left him.
BASS. 'A has shook hands with time; his funeral urn
Shall be my charge: remove the bloodless body. [310
The coronation must require attendance;
That past, my few days can be but one mourning. [*The body is carried out.*

SCENE III

The last scene is the interior of a temple. The altar is covered with white, and has two lights of virgin wax upon it. The music of recorders is heard, during which the body of ITHOCLES *is borne in by four Attendants and placed beside the altar. The body is attired in a rich robe, and the head wears a crown.*

CALANTHA, *in a white robe, and* [9 *crowned, enters, followed by* EUPHRANEA, CHRISTALLA, *and* PHILEMA, *all in white. After them come* NEARCHUS, ARMOSTES, CROTOLON, PROPHILUS, AMELUS, BASSANES, HEMOPHIL, *and* GRONEAS.

CALANTHA *kneels before the altar, the ladies kneeling behind her, and the others*

[5] Must be a mistake for either Nearchus or Amelus.

[6] skill.

standing apart. The music ceases during her devotions, resuming softly when the kneelers arise and do obeisance to the altar.

CAL. Our orisons are heard; the gods are merciful.—
Now tell me, you whose loyalties pay tribute
To us, your lawful sovereign, how unskilful
Your duties or obedience is to render
Subjection to the sceptre of a virgin,
Who have been ever fortunate in princes
Of masculine and stirring composition.
A woman has enough to govern wisely
Her own demeanors, passions, and divisions.
A nation warlike and inured to practice
Of policy and labor cannot brook
A feminate authority: we therefore
Command your counsel, how you may advise us
In choosing of a husband whose abilities
Can better guide this kingdom.
NEAR. Royal lady,
Your law is in your will.
ARM. We have seen tokens
Of constancy too lately to mistrust it.
CROT. Yet, if your highness settle on a choice
By your own judgment both allowed and liked of,
Sparta may grow in power, and proceed
To an increasing height.
CAL., *to* BASSANES. Hold you the same mind?
BASS. Alas, great mistress, reason is so clouded
With the thick darkness of my infinite woes,
That I forecast nor dangers, hopes, or safety.
Give me some corner of the world to wear out
The remnant of the minutes I must number,
Where I may hear no sounds but sad complaints
Of virgins who have lost contracted partners;
Of husbands howling that their wives were ravished
By some untimely fate; of friends divided
By churlish opposition; or of fathers
Weeping upon their children's slaughtered carcases,
Or daughters groaning o'er their fathers' hearses;
And I can dwell there, and with these keep consort
As musical as theirs. What can you look for
From an old, foolish, peevish, doting man
But craziness of age?
CAL. Cousin of Argos.
NEAR. Madam?
CAL. Were I presently
To choose you for my lord, I'll open freely
What articles I would propose to treat on
Before our marriage.
NEAR. Name them, virtuous lady.
CAL. I would presume you would retain the royalty
Of Sparta in her own bounds; then in Argos
Armostes might be viceroy; in Messene
Might Crotolon bear sway; and Bassanes—
BASS. I, queen! alas, what I?
CAL. Be Sparta's marshal.
The multitudes of high employments could not
But set a peace to private griefs. These gentlemen,
Groneas and Hemophil, with worthy pensions
Should wait upon your person in your chamber.—
I would bestow Christalla on Amelus.
She'll prove a constant wife; and Philema
Should into Vesta's Temple.
BASS. <This is a testament!
It sounds not like conditions on a marriage.>
NEAR. All this should be performed.
CAL. Lastly, for Prophilus,
He should be, cousin, solemnly invested
In all those honors, titles, and preferments

Which his dear friend and my neglected husband
Too short a time enjoyed.
PRO. I am unworthy [120
To live in your remembrance.
EUPH. Excellent lady!
NEAR. Madam, what means that word, "neglected husband"?
CAL. Forgive me.—Now I turn to thee, thou shadow
Of my contracted lord!—Bear witness all,
I put my mother's wedding-ring upon
His finger; 'twas my father's last be- [129
quest. [*Places a ring on the finger of* ITHOCLES.
Thus I new-marry him whose wife I am;
Death shall not separate us. O, my lords,
I but deceived your eyes with antic gesture,
When one news straight came huddling on another
Of death! and death! and death! Still I danced forward; [140
But it struck home, and here, and in an instant.
Be such mere women, who with shrieks and outcries
Can vow a present end to all their sorrows,
Yet live to vow[7] new pleasures, and outlive them.
They are the silent griefs which cut the heart-strings; [150
Let me die smiling.
NEAR. 'Tis a truth too ominous.
CAL. One kiss on these cold lips, my last! [*Kisses* ITHOCLES.]—Crack, crack!—
Argos now's Sparta's king.—Command the voices
Which wait at th' altar now to sing the song
I fitted for my end. [160
NEAR. Sirs, the song!
[*The four Attendants who have borne in the body of* ITHOCLES *sing.*

ALL. Glories, pleasures, pomps, delights, and ease,
Can but please
Outward senses when the mind
Is or[8] untroubled or by peace refined.
1. Crowns may flourish and decay,
Beauties shine, but fade away. [170
2. Youth may revel, yet it must
Lie down in a bed of dust.
3. Earthly honors flow and waste,
Time alone doth change and last.
ALL. Sorrows mingled with contents prepare
Rest for care;
Love only reigns in death; though art
Can find no comfort for a broken heart.

[CALANTHA *dies.* [180
ARM. Look to the queen!
BASS. Her heart is broke, indeed.—
O, royal maid, would thou hadst missed this part!
Yet 'twas a brave one. I must weep to see
Her smile in death.
ARM. Wise Tecnicus! thus said he:
"When youth is ripe, and age from time doth part, [190
The Lifeless Trunk shall wed the Broken Heart."
'Tis here fulfilled.
NEAR. I am your king.
ALL. Long live
Nearchus, King of Sparta!
NEAR. Her last will
Shall never be digressed from: wait in order.
Upon these faithful lovers, as becomes us.— [201
The counsels of the gods are never known
Till men can call th' effects of them their own.

EPILOGUE

WHERE noble judgments and clear eyes are fixed
To grace endeavor, there sits truth, not mixed
With ignorance; those censures may command
Belief which talk not till they understand.
Let some say, "This was flat!" some, "Here the scene

[7] Probably repeated wrongly from the previous line; the substitution of "court" has been suggested.

[8] B, not.

Fell from its height;" another, that the mean
Was "ill observed" in such a growing passion
As it transcended either state or fashion:
Some few may cry, " 'Twas pretty well," or so,
"But—" and there shrug in silence; yet we know
Our writer's aim was in the whole addressed
Well to deserve of *all,* but please the *best;*
Which granted, by th' allowance of this strain
The BROKEN HEART may be pieced up again.

COMUS

BY

JOHN MILTON

INTRODUCTION

Various plays have been excluded from this collection on the ground that, however great the poetry or the philosophy they contain, they fail as drama. Why then should "Comus" be included, when it makes no pretensions to being drama in the ordinary sense? Well, that is just the reason: it must not be judged for what it does not pretend to be. If Chapman's "Bussy d'Ambois," which for the magnificence of its thought and its poetry is among the greatest of Elizabethan plays, be rejected, it is because it is offered to us as acting drama, and so asks to be judged on its dramatic merits, and on that score it fails egregiously. "Comus," on the contrary, claims to be nothing more than a masque, and may therefore be judged entirely on its lyrical quality. So judged, it stands alone among the products of its time: it remains to this day the finest lyrical drama in the English language.

The term "masque" is not a very enlightening one; most of the entertainments that passed under the name in the days of James I and Charles I were not dramatic at all: they were amorphous productions, containing a great deal of music, singing, dancing, and spectacle, much very fine poetry, and no plot whatever. They had no story to tell; only an allegory to present. Milton's "masque" differs from almost all of them in that it has a clear and distinct story. It is, in fact, dramatic in conception, as in form: what it lacks is dramatic quality and dramatic action. It is really rather a didactic pastoral than a masque. Its poetry and its songs are of the most exquisite. Here we see the culmination of the verse of Marlowe. The Miltonic verse has an unequalled majesty; and, if it be not at its very finest in "Comus," it yet presents us a blank verse that is unrivalled in the Elizabethan drama save by the more flexible, but less imposing, verse of Shakespeare.

"Comus" was produced at Ludlow Castle on the night of September 29, 1634. The music (and the reader must always bear in mind that it was written for music) was by the famous composer, Henry Lawes. The occasion of the production was the installation of the Earl of Bridgewater as President of the Council of Wales. An edition of "Comus" was issued in 1637, without Milton's name. In 1645 it appeared in a volume of his poems.

CHARACTERS

THE ATTENDANT SPIRIT, *afterwards in the habit of* THYRSIS.
COMUS, *an enchanter.*
THE LADY.
FIRST BROTHER.
SECOND BROTHER.
SABRINA, *the Nymph.*
Country Dancers, Followers of Comus

COMUS

Scene I

Comus *is a terrible enchanter, who gives to his victims the semblance of brute beasts. Into a wild wood, which is the scene of his filthy revelries, the* Attendant Spirit *enters. It is night.*

Spir. Before the starry threshold of Jove's court
My mansion is, where those immortal shapes
Of bright aërial Spirits live insphered
In regions mild of calm and serene air,
Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot
Which men call Earth, and, with low-thoughted care,
Confined and pestered[1] in this pinfold here,
Strive to keep up a frail and feverish being,
Unmindful of the crown that Virtue gives,
After this mortal change, to her true servants
Amongst the enthronëd gods on sainted seats.
Yet some there be that by due steps aspire
To lay their just hands on that golden key
That opes the Palace of Eternity.
To such my errand is; and, but for such,
I would not soil these pure ambrosial weeds
With the rank vapors of this sin-worn mould.
But to my task. Neptune, besides the sway
Of every salt flood and each ebbing stream,
Took in, by lot 'twixt high and nether Jove,
Imperial rule of all the sea-girt Isles
That, like to rich and various gems, inlay
The unadornëd bosom of the Deep;
Which he, to grace his tributary gods,
By course commits to several government,
And gives them leave to wear their sapphire crowns
And wield their little tridents. But this Isle,
The greatest and the best of all the main,
He quarters to his blue-haired deities;
And all this tract that fronts the falling sun
A noble Peer of mickle trust and power
Has in his charge, with tempered awe to guide
An old and haughty Nation, proud in arms:
Where his fair offspring, nursed in princely lore,
Are coming to attend their father's state
And new-intrusted sceptre. But their way
Lies through the perplexed paths of this drear wood,
The nodding horror of whose shady brows
Threats the forlorn and wandering passenger;
And here their tender age might suffer peril,
But that, by quick command from sovran Jove,
I was despatched for their defence and guard!
And listen why; for I will tell you now
What never yet was heard in tale or song,
From old or modern bard, in hull or bower:
Bacchus, that first from out the purple grape

[1] tethered.

Crushed the sweet poison of misusëd wine,
After the Tuscan mariners transformed,
Coasting the Tyrrhene shore, as the winds listed,
On Circe's island fell. (Who knows not Circe, [91
The daughter of the Sun, whose charmëd cup
Whoever tasted lost his upright shape,
And downward fell into a grovelling swine?)
This Nymph, that gazed upon his clustering locks,
With ivy berries wreathed, and his blithe youth, [100
Had by him, ere he parted thence, a son
Much like his father, but his mother more,
Whom therefore she brought up, and "Comus" named:
Who, ripe and frolic of his full-grown age,[2]
Roving the Celtic and Iberian fields,
At last betakes him to this ominous wood,
And, in thick shelter of black shades imbowered, [111
Excels his mother at her mighty art;
Offering to every weary traveller
His orient[3] liquor in a crystal glass,
To quench the drouth of Phœbus; which as they taste
(For most do taste through fond[4] intemperate thirst),
Soon as the potion works, their human count'nance, [120
The express resemblance of the gods, is changed
Into some brutish form of wolf or bear,
Or ounce or tiger, hog or bearded goat,
All other parts remaining as they were.
And they, so perfect is their misery,
Not once perceive their foul disfigurement,
But boast themselves more comely than before, [130
And all their friends and native home forget,
To roll with pleasure in a sensual sty.
Therefore, when any favored of high Jove
Chances to pass through this adventurous[5] glade,
Swift as the sparkle of a glancing star
I shoot from heaven, to give him safe convóy, [139
As now I do. But first I must put off
These my sky-robes, spun out of Iris' woof,
And take the weeds and likeness of a swain
That to the service of this house belongs,
Who, with his soft pipe and smooth-dittied song,
Well knows to still the wild winds when they roar,
And hush the waving woods; nor of less faith, [151
And in this office of his mountain watch
Likeliest, and nearest to the present aid
Of this occasion. But I hear the tread
Of hateful steps; I must be viewless now. [*Retires.*

COMUS *enters, with a charming-rod in one hand, his glass in the other; with him a rout of Monsters, headed like sundry sorts of wild beasts, but otherwise* [160 *like men and women, their apparel glistering. They come in making a riotous and unruly noise, with torches in their hands.*

COM. The star that bids the shepherd fold
Now the top of heaven doth hold;
And the gilded car of Day
His glowing axle doth allay
In the steep Atlantic stream; [170
And the slope[6] Sun his upward beam
Shoots against the dusky pole,
Pacing toward the other goal
Of his chamber in the east.
Meanwhile, welcome joy and feast,
Midnight shout and revelry,
Tipsy dance and jollity.
Braid your locks with rosy twine,[7]
Dropping odors, dropping wine.
Rigor now is gone to bed; [180
And Advice, with scrupulous head,
Strict Age, and sour Severity,
With their grave saws, in slumber lie.

[2] rejoicing in his strength.
[3] clear. [4] foolish.
[5] dangerous. [6] setting.
[7] entwined roses.

We, that are of purer fire,
Imitate the starry quire,
Who, in their nightly watchful spheres,
Lead in swift round the months and years.
The sounds and seas, with all their finny drove,
Now to the moon in wavering morrice move;
And on the tawny sands and shelves
Trip the pert Fairies and the dapper Elves.
By dimpled brook and fountain-brim,
The Wood-Nymphs, decked with daisies trim,
Their merry wakes[8] and pastimes keep:
What hath night to do with sleep?
Night hath better sweets to prove;
Venus now wakes, and wakens Love.
Come, let us our rites begin;
'Tis only daylight that makes sin,
Which these dun shades will ne'er report.
Hail, goddess of nocturnal sport,
Dark-veiled Cotytto, to whom the secret flame
Of midnight torches burns! mysterious Dame,
That ne'er art called but when the dragon womb
Of Stygian darkness spets her thickest gloom,
And makes one blot of all the air!
Stay thy cloudy ebon chair,[9]
Wherein thou rid'st with Hecat', and befriend
Us, thy vowed priests, till utmost end
Of all thy dues be done, and none left out,
Ere the blabbing eastern scout,
The nice[10] Morn, on the Indian steep
From her cabined loop-hole peep,
And to the tell-tale Sun descry[11]
Our concealed solemnity.
Come, knit hands, and beat the ground
In a light fantastic round. [*They dance the measure.*
Break off, break off! I feel the different pace
Of some chaste footing near about this ground.

[8] night revels. [9] chariot.
[10] fastidious. [11] reveal.

Run to your shrouds[12] within these brakes and trees;
Our number may affright. [*All vanish, save* Comus.] Some virgin sure
(For so I can distinguish by mine art)
Benighted in these woods! Now to my charms
And to my wily trains. I shall ere long
Be well stocked with as fair a herd as grazed
About my mother Circe. [*Making a gesture of incantation.*] Thus I hurl
My dazzling spells into the spongy[13] air,
Of power to cheat the eye with blear illusion,
And give it false presentments, lest the place
And my quaint habits breed astonishment
And put the Damsel to suspicious flight;
Which must not be, for that's against my course.
I, under fair pretence of friendly ends,
And well-placed words of glozing[14] courtesy,
Baited with reasons not unplausible,
Wind me into the easy-hearted man,
And hug him into snares. When once her eye
Hath met the virtue[15] of this magic dust,
I shall appear some harmless villager,
Whom thrift keeps up about his country gear.[16]
But here she comes; I fairly[17] step aside,
And hearken, if I may her business hear.
[*Steps behind a tree.*

The Lady *enters.*

Lady. This way the noise was, if mine ear be true,
My best guide now. Methought it was the sound
Of riot and ill-managed merriment,
Such as the jocund flute or gamesome pipe
Stirs up among the loose unlettered hinds,
When, for their teeming flocks and granges[18] full,

[12] hiding-places. [13] receptive.
[14] deceitful. [15] power.
[16] business. [17] softly.
[18] granaries.

In wanton dance they praise the bounteous Pan,
And thank the gods amiss. I should be loth
To meet the rudeness and swilled insolence
Of such late wassailers; yet, oh! where else
Shall I inform my unacquainted feet [289
In the blind mazes of this tangled wood?
My brothers, when they saw me wearied out
With this long way, resolving here to lodge
Under the spreading favor of these pines,
Stepped, as they said, to the next thicket-side
To bring me berries or such cooling fruit
As the kind hospitable woods provide.
They left me then when the grey-hooded even, [301
Like a sad votarist in palmer's weed,
Rose from the hindmost wheels of Phœbus' wain; [19]
But where they are, and why they came not back,
Is now the labor of my thoughts. 'Tis likeliest
They had engaged their wandering steps too far; [310
And envious [20] darkness, ere they could return,
Had stole them from me. Else, O thievish Night,
Why shouldst thou, but for some felonious end,
In thy dark lantern thus close up the stars
That Nature hung in heaven, and filled their lamps [320
With everlasting oil, to give due light
To the misled and lonely traveller?
This is the place, as well as I may guess,
Whence even now the tumult of loud mirth
Was rife and perfect [21] in my listening ear;
Yet nought but single darkness do I find.
What might this be? A thousand fantasies [330
Begin to throng into my memory,
Of calling shapes, and beck'ning shadows dire,
And airy tongues that syllable men's names
On sands and shores and desert wildernesses.
These thoughts may startle well, but not astound
The virtuous mind, that ever walks attended [341
By a strong siding champion, Conscïence.
O welcome, pure-eyed Faith, white-handed Hope,
Thou hovering angel girt with golden wings,
And thou unblemished form of Chastity!
I see ye visibly, and now believe
That He, the Supreme Good, t' whom all things ill [350
Are but as slavish officers of vengeance,
Would send a glist'ring guardian, if need were,
To keep my life and honor unassailed.—
Was I deceived, or did a sable cloud
Turn forth her silver lining on the night?
I did not err: there does a sable cloud
Turn forth her silver lining on the night,
And casts a gleam over this tufted grove.
I cannot hallo to my brothers; but [360
Such noise as I can make to be heard farthest
I'll venture; for my new-enlivened spirits
Prompt me; and they perhaps are not far off. [*She sings.*

Sweet Echo, sweetest nymph, that liv'st unseen
Within thy airy shell
By slow Meander's margent green,
And in the violet-embroidered vale [370
Where the love-lorn nightingale
Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well:
Canst thou not tell me of a gentle pair
That likest thy Narcissus are?
O if thou have
Hid them in some flow'ry cave,
Tell me but where,
Sweet Queen of Parley, daughter of the Sphere! [380
So may'st thou be translated to the skies,
And give resounding grace to all Heav'n's harmonies!

[19] chariot. [20] malicious. [21] distinct.

Com. <Can any mortal mixture of earth's mould
Breathe such divine enchanting ravishment?
Sure something holy lodges in that breast,
And with these raptures moves the vocal air [390
To testify his hidden residence.
How sweetly did they float upon the wings
Of silence through the empty-vaulted night,
At every fall [22] smoothing the raven down
Of darkness till it smiled! I have oft heard [399
My mother Circe with the Sirens three,
Amidst the flow'ry-kirtled Naiades,
Culling their potent herbs and baleful drugs,
Who, as they sung, would take the prisoned soul
And lap it in Elysium. Scylla wept,
And chid her barking waves into attention;
And fell Charybdis murmured soft applause. [410
Yet they in pleasing slumber lulled the sense,
And in sweet madness robbed it of itself;
But such a sacred and home-felt delight,
Such sober certainty of waking bliss,
I never heard till now. I'll speak to her,
And she shall be my Queen.> [*Comes forth from his hiding-place.*] Hail,
foreign wonder!
Whom certain these rough shades did never breed, [421
Unless the Goddess that in rural shrine
Dwell'st here with Pan or Sylvan, by blest song
Forbidding every bleak unkindly fog
To touch the prosperous growth of this tall wood.
Lady. Nay, gentle shepherd, ill is lost that praise [429
That is addressed to unattending ears.
Not any boast of skill, but extreme shift
How to regain my severed company,
Compelled me to awake the courteous Echo

[22] cadence.

To give me answer from her mossy couch.
Com. What chance, good Lady, hath bereft you thus?
Lady. Dim darkness and this leafy labyrinth. [440
Com. Could that divide you from near-ushering guides?
Lady. They left me weary on a grassy turf.
Com. By falsehood, or discourtesy, or why?
Lady. To seek i' th' valley some cool friendly spring.
Com. And left your fair side all unguarded, Lady? [450
Lady. They were but twain, and purposed quick return.
Com. Perhaps forestalling night prevented them.
Lady. How easy my misfortune is to hit!
Com. Imports their loss, beside the present need?
Lady. No less than if I should my brothers lose. [460
Com. Were they of manly prime, or youthful bloom?
Lady. As smooth as Hebe's their unrazored lips. [*The* Spirit *hastens away.*
Com. Two such I saw, what time the labored ox
In his loose traces from the furrow came,
And the swinked hedger [23] at his supper sat. [470
I saw them under a green mantling vine,
That crawls along the side of yon small hill,
Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots;
Their port [24] was more than human, as they stood.
I took it for a faery visiön
Of some gay creatures of the element,
That in the colors of the rainbow live,
And play i' th' plighted [25] clouds. I was awe-struck, [482
And, as I passed, I worshipped. If those you seek,

[23] the weary hedgemender.
[24] bearing. [25] folded.

It were a journey like the path to heaven
To help you find them.
LADY. Gentle villager,
What readiest way would bring me to that place?
COM. Due west it rises from this shrubby point. [491
LADY. To find out that, good shepherd, I suppose,
In such a scant allowance of starlight,
Would overtask the best land-pilot's art,
Without the sure guess of well-practised feet.
COM. I know each lane, and every alley green, [499
Dingle, or bushy dell, of this wild wood,
And every bosky bourn[26] from side to side,
My daily walks and ancient neighborhood;
And, if your stray attendance be yet lodged
Or shroud within these limits, I shall know
Ere morrow wake or the low-roosted lark
From her thatched pallet rouse. If otherwise, [511
I can conduct you, Lady, to a low
But loyal cottage, where you may be safe
Till further quest.
LADY. Shepherd, I take thy word,
And trust thy honest-offered courtesy,
Which oft is sooner found in lowly sheds,
With smoky rafters, than in tap'stry halls
And courts of princes, where it first was named, [520
And yet is most pretended. In a place
Less warranted than this, or less secure,
I cannot be, that I should fear to change it.—
Eye me, blest Providence, and square my trial
To my proportioned strength!—Shepherd, lead on.

SCENE II

In another part of the wood, the two BROTHERS *are troubled by their losing of their sister. The one is an optimist; the other is practical.*

ELD. BRO. Unmuffle, ye faint stars; and thou, fair Moon,
That wont'st to love the traveller's benison,
Stoop thy pale visage through an amber cloud, [10
And disinherit Chaos, that reigns here
In double night of darkness and of shades;
Or, if your influence be quite dammed up
With black usurping mists, some gentle taper,
Though a rush candle from the wicker hole
Of some clay habitation, visit us
With thy long-levelled rule of streaming light, [21
And thou shalt be our star of Arcady
Or Tyrian Cynosure.
SEC. BRO. Or, if our eyes
Be barred that happiness, might we but hear
The folded flocks, penned in their wattled cotes,
Or sound of past'ral reed with oaten stops, [30
Or whistle from the lodge, or village cock
Count the night-watches to his feathery dames,
'Twould be some solace yet, some little cheering,
In this close dungeon of innumerous[1] boughs.
But, oh, that hapless virgin, our lost sister! [39
Where may she wander now, whither betake her
From the chill dew, among rude burrs and thistles?
Perhaps some cold bank is her bolster now,
Or 'gainst the rugged bark of some broad elm
Leans her unpillowed head, fraught with sad fears. [49
What if in wild amazement and affright,
Or, while we speak, within the direful grasp
Of savage hunger, or of savage heat?

[26] bushy-banked stream.

[1] innumerable.

ELD. BRO. Peace, brother: be not over-exquisite
To cast[2] the fashion of uncertain evils;
For, grant they be so, while they rest unknown,
What need a man forestall his date of grief, [60
And run to meet what he would most avoid?
Or, if they be but false alarms of fear,
How bitter is such self-delusiön!
I do not think my sister so to seek,
Or so unprincipled in Virtue's book
And the sweet peace that goodness bosoms ever,
As that the single want of light and noise [70
(Not being in danger, as I trust she is not)
Could stir the constant mood of her calm thoughts,
And put them into misbecoming plight.
Virtue could see to do what Virtue would
By her own radiant light, though sun and moon
Were in the flat sea sunk; and Wisdom's self [80
Oft seeks to sweet retirëd solitude,
Where, with her best nurse, Contemplatiön,
She plumes her feathers, and lets grow her wings,
That, in the various bustle of resort,
Were all-to ruffled, and sometimes impaired.
He that has light within his own clear breast [90
May sit i' th' centre and enjoy bright day:
But he that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts
Benighted walks under the mid-day sun;
Himself is his own dungeon.
SEC. BRO. 'Tis most true
That musing Meditation most affects
The pensive secrecy of desert cell,
Far from the cheerful haunt of men and herds, [101
And sits as safe as in a senate-house;
For who would rob a hermit of his weeds,
His few books, or his beads, or maple dish,
Or do his grey hairs any violence?
But Beauty, like the fair Hesperian tree
Laden with blooming gold, had need the guard [109
Of dragon-watch with unenchanted[3] eye,
To save her blossoms and defend her fruit
From the rash hand of bold Incontinence.
You may as well spread out the unsunned heaps
Of miser's treasure by an outlaw's den,
And tell me it is safe, as bid me hope
Danger will wink on Opportunity,
And let a single helpless maiden pass
Uninjured in this wild surrounding waste.
Of night or loneliness it recks me not; [120
I fear the dread events that dog them both,
Lest some ill-greeting touch attempt the person
Of our unownëd[4] sister.
ELD. BRO. I do not, brother,
Infer as if I thought my sister's state
Secure without all doubt or controversy;
Yet, where an equal poise of hope and fear [130
Does arbitrate th' event, my nature is
That I incline to hope rather than fear,
And gladly banish squint suspiciön.
My sister is not so defenceless left
As you imagine; she has a hidden strength,
Which you remember not.
SEC. BRO. What hidden strength,
Unless the strength of Heaven, if you mean that? [140
ELD. BRO. I mean that too, but yet a hidden strength,
Which, if Heaven gave it, may be termed her own:
'Tis Chastity, my brother, Chastity:
She that has that is clad in cómplete steel,
And, like a quivered nymph with arrows keen,
May trace[5] huge forests and unharbored[6] heaths, [151
Infamous hills and sandy perilous wilds;

[2] forecast.

[3] incapable of enchantment.
[4] unprotected.
[5] traverse. [6] shelterless.

Where, through the sacred rays of chastity,
No savage fierce, bandite, or mountaineer,
Will dare to soil her virgin purity.
Yea, there where very desolation dwells,
By grots and caverns shagged with horrid shades,
She may pass on with unblenched majesty, [161
Be it not done in pride or in presumption.
Some say no evil thing that walks by night,
In fog or fire, by lake or moorish fen,
Blue meagre hag, or stubborn unlaid ghost,
That breaks his magic chains at curfew time, [170
No goblin or swart faery of the mine,
Hath hurtful power o'er true virginity.
Do ye believe me yet, or shall I call
Antiquity from the old schools of Greece
To testify the arms of Chastity?
Hence had the huntress Dian her dread bow,
Fair silver-shafted Queen for ever chaste,
Wherewith she tamed the brinded lioness [180
And spotted mountain-pard, but set at nought
The frivolous bolt of Cupid; gods and men
Feared her stern frown, and she was queen o' th' woods.
What was that snaky-headed Gorgon shield
That wise Minerva wore, unconquered virgin, [190
Wherewith she freezed her foes to congealed stone,
But rigid looks of chaste austerity
And noble grace, that dashed brute violence
With sudden adoration and blank awe?
So dear to Heaven is saintly chastity
That, when a soul is found sincerely so,
A thousand liveried angels lackey her,
Driving far off each thing of sin and guilt,
And in clear dream and solemn visiön [201
Tell her of things that no gross ear can hear;
Till oft converse with heav'nly habitants
Begin to cast a beam on th' outward shape,
The unpolluted temple of the mind,
And turns it by degrees to the soul's essence,
Till all be made immortal. But, when lust, [211
By unchaste looks, loose gestures, and foul talk,
But most by lewd and lavish act of sin,
Lets in defilement to the inward parts,
The soul grows clotted by contagiön,
Embodies, and imbrutes, till she quite lose
The divine property of her first being.
Such as those thick and gloomy [220 shadows damp
Oft seen in charnel-vaults and sepulchres,
Ling'ring and sitting by a new-made grave,
As loth to leave the body that it loved,
And linked itself by carnal sensualty
To a degenerate and degraded state.
SEC. BRO. How charming is divine Philosophy!
Not harsh and crabbed, as dull fools suppose, [231
But musical as is Apollo's lute,
And a perpetual feast of nectared sweets,
Where no crude surfeit reigns. [*A distant hallo is heard.*
ELD. BRO. List! list! I hear
Some far-off hallo break the silent air.
SEC. BRO. Methought so too; what should it be?
ELD. BRO. For certain, [240
Either some one, like us, night-foundered here,
Or else some neighbor woodman, or, at worst,
Some roving robber calling to his fellows.
SEC. BRO. Heaven keep my sister! [*The hallo is heard nearer.*] Again, again, and near! [249
Best draw, and stand upon our guard.
[*Both draw their swords.*
ELD. BRO. I'll hallo.
If he be friendly, he comes well: if not,

Defence is a good cause, and Heaven be for us! [*Halloes, and a hallo is heard in reply.*

Enter the Attendant Spirit, *habited like a shepherd.*

That hallo I should know. What are you? speak.
Come not too near; you fall on iron stakes else.

Spir. What voice is that? my young Lord? speak again.

Sec. Bro. O brother, 'tis my father's shepherd, sure.

Eld. Bro. Thyrsis, whose artful strains have oft delayed
The huddling[7] brook to hear his madrigal,
And sweetened every musk-rose of the dale!
How cam'st thou here, good swain? Hath any ram
Slipped from the fold, or young kid lost his dam,
Or straggling wether the pent flock forsook?
How couldst thou find this dark sequestered nook?

Spir. O my loved master's heir, and his next[8] joy,
I came not here on such a trivial toy
As a strayed ewe, or to pursue the stealth
Of pilfering wolf; not all the fleecy wealth
That doth enrich these downs is worth a thought
To this my errand, and the care it brought.
But, oh! my virgin Lady, where is she?
How chance she is not in your company?

Eld. Bro. To tell thee sadly,[9] shepherd, without blame
Or our neglect, we lost her as we came.

Spir. Ay me unhappy! then my fears are true.

Eld. Bro. What fears, good Thyrsis? Prithee briefly shew.

Spir. I'll tell ye. 'Tis not vain or fabulous
(Though so esteemed by shallow ignorance)
What the sage poets, taught by th' heavenly Muse,
Storied of old in high immortal verse
Of dire Chimeras and enchanted Isles,
And rifted rocks whose entrance leads to Hell;
For such there be; but unbelief is blind.
Within the navel of this hideous wood,
Immured in cypress shades, a sorcerer dwells,
Of Bacchus and of Circe born, great Comus,
Deep skilled in all his mother's witcheries,
And here to every thirsty wanderer
By sly enticement gives his baneful cup,
With many murmurs[10] mixed, whose pleasing poison
The visage quite transforms of him that drinks,
And the inglorious likeness of a beast
Fixes instead, unmoulding reason's mintage
Charactered in the face. This have I learnt
Tending my flocks hard by i' th' hilly crofts
That brow[11] this bottom glade; whence night by night
He and his monstrous rout are heard to howl
Like stabled wolves or tigers at their prey,
Doing abhorrëd rites to Hecate
In their obscurëd haunts of inmost bowers.
Yet have they many baits and guileful spells
T' inveigle and invite th' unwary sense
Of them that pass unweeting by the way.
This evening late, by then the chewing flocks
Had ta'en their supper on the savory herb
Of knot-grass dew-besprent, and were in fold,
I sat me down to watch upon a bank
With ivy canopied, and interwove
With flaunting honeysuckle, and began,

[7] hastening. [8] dearest. [9] seriously. [10] incantations. [11] overlook.

Wrapt in a pleasing fit of melancholy,
To meditate my rural minstrelsy,
Till fancy had her fill. But ere a close
The wonted roar was up amidst the woods,
And filled the air with barbarous dissonance;
At which I ceased, and listened them a while, [360
Till an unusual stop of sudden silence
Gave respite to the drowsy-flighted steeds
That draw the litter of close-curtained Sleep.
At last a soft and solemn-breathing sound
Rose like a steam of rich distilled perfumes,
And stole upon the air, that even Silence
Was took ere she was ware,[12] and wished she might [370
Deny her nature, and be never more,
Still to be so displaced. I was all ear,
And took in strains that might create a soul
Under the ribs of Death. But, oh! ere long
Too well I did perceive it was the voice
Of my most honored Lady, your dear sister.
Amazed I stood, harrowed with grief and fear; [381
And "O poor hapless Nightingale," thought I,
"How sweet thou sing'st, how near the deadly snare!"
Then down the lawns I ran with headlong haste,
Through paths and turnings often trod by day,
Till, guided by mine ear, I found the place [391
Where that damned wizard, hid in sly disguise
(For so by certain signs I knew), had met
Already, ere my best speed could prevent,
The aidless innocent lady, his wished prey;
Who gently asked if he had seen [400 such two,
Supposing him some neighbor villager.
Longer I durst not stay, but soon I guessed
Ye were the two she meant; with that I sprung
Into swift flight, till I had found you here;
But further know I not. [409

Sec. Bro. O night and shades,
How are ye joined with hell in triple knot
Against th' unarmëd weakness of one virgin,
Alone and helpless! Is this the confidence
You gave me, brother?

Eld. Bro. Yes, and keep it still;
Lean on it safely; not a period
Shall be unsaid, for me. Against the threats [421
Of malice or of sorcery, or that power
Which erring men call Chance, this I hold firm:
Virtue may be assailed, but never hurt,
Surprised by unjust force, but not enthralled;
Yea, even that which Mischief meant most harm
Shall in the happy[13] trial prove [430 most glory;
But evil on itself shall back recoil,
And mix no more with goodness, when at last,
Gathered like scum, and settled to itself,
It shall be, in eternal restless change,
Self-fed and self-consumed. If this fail,
The pillared firmament is rottenness,
And earth's base built on stubble. But come, let's on! [440
Against the opposing will and arm of Heaven
May never this just sword be lifted up;
But, for that damned magician, let him be girt
With all the grisly legiöns that troop
Under the sooty flag of Acheron,
Harpies and Hydras, or all the monstrous forms [449
'Twixt Africa and Ind, I'll find him out,

[12] aware.

[13] happy-ending.

And force him to restore his purchase[14] back,
Or drag him by the curls to a foul death,
Cursed as his life.
SPIR. Alas! good vent'rous youth,
I love thy courage yet and bold emprise;[15]
But here thy sword can do thee little stead: [459
Far other arms and other weapons must
Be those that quell the might of hellish charms.
He with his bare wand can unthread thy joints,
And crumble all thy sinews.
ELD. BRO. Why, prithee, shepherd,
How durst thou then thyself approach so near
As to make this relation?
SPIR. Care and utmost shifts [470
How to secure the Lady from surprisal
Brought to my mind a certain shepherd lad,
Of small regard to see to,[16] yet well skilled
In every virtuous[17] plant and healing herb
That spreads her verdant leaf to th' morning ray.
He loved me well, and oft would beg me sing; [481
Which, when I did, he on the tender grass
Would sit, and hearken e'en to ecstasy,
And in requital ope his leathern scrip,
And show me simples of a thousand names,
Telling their strange and vigorous faculties. [489
Amongst the rest a small unsightly root,
But of divine effect, he culled me out.
The leaf was darkish, and had prickles on it,
But in another country, as he said,
Bore a bright golden flow'r, but not in this soil;
Unknown, and like esteemed, and the dull swain
Treads on it daily with his clouted[18] shoon; [500
And yet more med'cinal is it than that moly
That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gave.
He called it hæmony, and gave it me,
And bade me keep it as of sovran use
'Gainst all enchantments, mildew, blast, or damp,
Or ghastly Furies' apparitiön. [508
I pursed it up, but little reck'ning made,
Till now that this extremity compelled;
But now I find it true; for by this means
I knew the foul enchanter, though disguised,
Entered the very lime-twigs of his spells,
And yet came off. If you have this about you
(As I will give you when we go), you may
Boldly assult the necromancer's hall; [519
Where if he be, with dauntless hardihood
And brandished blade rush on him: break his glass,
And shed the luscious liquor on the ground;
But seize his wand. Though he and his curst crew
Fierce sign of battle make, and menace high,
Or, like the sons of Vulcan, vomit smoke,
Yet will they soon retire, if he but shrink.
ELD. BRO. Thyrsis, lead on apace: I'll follow thee; [532
And some good angel bear a shield before us!

[14] booty. [15] enterprise.
[16] insignificant in appearance.
[17] medicinal.
[18] patched.

SCENE III

The scene changes to a stately palace, set out with all manner of deliciousness: soft music, tables spread with all dainties. COMUS *appears with his rabble, and the* LADY *set in an enchanted chair; to whom he offers his glass, which she puts by, and is about to rise.*

COM. Nay, Lady, sit. If I but wave this wand,
Your nerves are all chained up in alabaster, [11
And you a statue, or as Daphne was,

Root-bound, that fled Apollo.
LADY. Fool, do not boast.
Thou canst not touch the freedom of my mind
With all thy charms, although this corporal rind
Thou hast immanacled while Heav'n sees good.
COM. Why are you vexed, Lady? why do you frown?
Here dwell no frowns, nor anger; from these gates
Sorrow flies far. See, here be all the pleasures
That fancy can beget on youthful thoughts,
When the fresh blood grows lively, and returns
Brisk as the April buds in primrose season.
And first behold this cordial julep here,
That flames and dances in his crystal bounds,
With spirits of balm and fragrant syrups mixed.
Not that Nepenthes which the wife of Thone
In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena
Is of such pow'r to stir up joy as this,
To life so friendly, or so cool to thirst.
Why should you be so cruel to yourself,
And to those dainty limbs which Nature lent
For gentle usage and soft delicacy?
But you invert the covenants of her trust,
And harshly deal, like an ill borrower,
With that which you received on other terms,
Scorning the unexempt condition[1]
By which all mortal frailty must subsist,
Refreshment after toil, ease after pain,
That have been tired all day without repast,
And timely rest have wanted. But, fair virgin,
This will restore all soon.
LADY. 'Twill not, false traitor!
'Twill not restore the truth and honesty
That thou hast banished from thy tongue with lies.
Was this the cottage and the safe abode
Thou told'st me of? What grim aspects are these,
These ugly-headed monsters? Mercy guard me!
Hence with thy brewed enchantments, foul deceiver!
Hast thou betrayed my credulous innocence
With vizored falsehood and base forgery?[2]
And wouldst thou seek again to trap me here
With lickerish[3] baits fit to ensnare a brute?
Were it a draught for Juno when she banquets,
I would not taste thy treasonous offer. None
But such as are good men can give good things;
And that which is not good is not delicious
To a well-governed and wise appetite.
COM. O foolishness of men! that lend their ears
To those budge[4] doctors of the Stoic fur,
And fetch their precepts from the Cynic tub,
Praising the lean and sallow Abstinence!
Wherefore did Nature pour her bounties forth
With such a full and unwithdrawing hand,
Covering the earth with odors, fruits, and flocks,
Thronging the seas with spawn innumerable,
But all to please and sate the curious[5] taste?
And set to work millions of spinning worms,
That in their green shops weave the smooth-haired silk,
To deck her sons; and, that no corner might
Be vacant of her plenty, in her own loins

[1] condition from which none is exempt.
[2] deceit. [3] tasty.
[4] pedantic. [5] fastidious.

She hutched[6] the all-worshipped ore and precious gems,
To store her children with. If all the world
Should, in a pet of temp'rance, feed on pulse,
Drink the clear stream, and nothing wear but frieze,
Th' All-giver would be unthanked, would be unpraised, [120
Not half his riches known, and yet despised;
And we should serve him as a grudging master,
As a penurious niggard of his wealth,
And live like Nature's bastards, not her sons,
Who would be quite surcharged with her own weight, [129
And strangled with her waste fertility:
Th' earth cumbered, and the winged air darked with plumes.
The herds would over-multitude their lords;
The sea o'erfraught would swell, and th' unsought diamonds
Would so emblaze the forehead of the deep,
And so bestud with stars, that they below
Would grow inured to light, and come at last [141
To gaze upon the Sun with shameless brows.
List, Lady: be not coy, and be not cozened
With that same vaunted name, Virginity.
Beauty is Nature's coin; must not be hoarded,
But must be current; and the good thereof [150
Consists in mutual and partaken bliss,
Unsavory in th' enjoyment of itself.
If you let slip time, like a neglected rose
It withers on the stalk with languished head.
Beauty is Nature's brag, and must be shown
In courts, at feasts, and high solemnities,
Where most may wonder at the workmanship. [160

[6] hoarded.

It is for homely features to keep home;
They had their name thence; coarse complexiöns
And cheeks of sorry grain[7] will serve to ply
The sampler, and to tease the huswife's wool.
What need a vermeil-tinctured lip for that,
Love-darting eyes, or tresses like the morn? [171
There was another meaning in these gifts;
Think what, and be advised; you are but young yet.
LADY. <I had not thought to have unlocked my lips
In this unhallowed air, but that this juggler
Would think to charm my judgment, as mine eyes, [180
Obtruding false rules pranked in reason's garb.
I hate when Vice can bolt her arguments
And Virtue has no tongue to check her pride.>
Impostor! do not charge most innocent Nature,
As if she would her children should be riotous [189
With her abundance. She, good cateress,
Means her provision only to the good,
That live according to her sober laws,
And holy dictate of spare Temperance.
If every just man that now pines with want
Had but a moderate and beseeming share
Of that which lewdly-pampered Luxury
Now heaps upon some few with vast excess, [199
Nature's full blessings would be well-dispensed
In unsuperfluous even proportiön,
And she no whit encumbered with her store;
And then the Giver would be better thanked,
His praise due paid; for swinish gluttony
Ne'er looks to Heaven amidst his gorgeous feast,
But, with besotted base ingratitude, [210

[7] dull color.

Crams, and blasphemes his feeder. Shall
I go on?
Or have I said enow? To him that
dares
Arm his profane tongue with contemptu-
ous words
Against the sun-clad pow'r of Chastity
Fain would I something say; yet to what
end? [219
Thou hast nor ear nor soul, to apprehend
The sublime notion and high mystery
That must be uttered to unfold the sage
And serious doctrine of virginity;
And thou art worthy that thou shouldst
not know
More happiness than this thy present lot.
Enjoy your dear wit, and gay rhetoric,
That hath so well been taught her daz-
zling fence;
Thou art not fit to hear thyself con-
vinced. [231
Yet, should I try, the uncontrollëd worth
Of this pure cause would kindle my rapt
spirits
To such a flame of sacred vehemence
That dumb things would be moved to
sympathize,
And the brute earth would lend her
nerves, and shake,
Till all thy magic structures, reared so
high, [241
Were shattered into heaps o'er thy false
head.

COMUS. <She fables not. I feel that
I do fear
Her words, set off by some superior
power;
And, though not mortal, yet a cold shud-
d'ring dew
Dips me all o'er, as when the wrath [250
of Jove
Speaks thunder and the chains of Erebus
To some of Saturn's crew. I must dis-
semble,
And try her yet more strongly.> Come,
no more!
This is mere moral babble, and direct
Against the canon laws of our foundation.
I must not suffer this; yet 'tis but the
lees [260
And settlings of a melancholy blood.
[*Extends glass.*
But this will cure all straight; one sip
of this
Will bathe the drooping spirits in delight
Beyond the bliss of dreams. Be wise, and
taste.

The BROTHERS *rush in with swords drawn, wrest his glass out of his hand, and break it against the ground: his rout make sign of resistance, but are all driven in. The* ATTENDANT SPIRIT *comes in.* [272

SPIR. What! have you let the false
Enchanter scape?
O, ye mistook; ye should have snatched
his wand,
And bound him fast. Without his rod
reversed,
And backward mutters of dissevering
power, [280
We cannot free the Lady that sits here
In stony fetters fixed and motionless.—
Yet stay: be not disturbed; now I be-
think me,
Some other means I have which may be
used,
Which once of Melibœus old I learnt,
The soothest[s] shepherd that ere piped on
plains.
There is a gentle Nymph not far from
hence, [291
That with moist curb sways the smooth
Severn stream:
Sabrina is her name, a virgin pure.
Whilom she was the daughter of Locrine,
That had the sceptre from his father
Brute.
She, guiltless damsel, flying the mad pur-
suit [299
Of her enragëd stepdame, Guendolen,
Commended her fair innocence to the
flood
That stayed her flight with his cross-
flowing course.
The water-nymphs that in the bottom
played
Held up their pearlëd wrists, and took
her in,
Bearing her straight to agëd Nereus' hall,

[s] truest.

Who, piteous of her woes, reared her lank[9] head,
And gave her to his daughters to imbathe
In nectared lavers[10] strewed with asphodel,
And through the porch and inlet of each sense
Dropped in ambrosial oils, till she revived,
And underwent a quick immortal change,
Made Goddess of the river. Still she retains
Her maiden gentleness, and oft at eve
Visits the herds along the twilight meadows,
Helping all urchin blasts, and ill-luck signs
That the shrewd[11] meddling elf delights to make,
Which she with precious vialed liquors heals;
For which the shepherds, at their festivals,
Carol her goodness loud in rustic lays,
And throw sweet garland wreaths into her stream,
Of pansies, pinks, and gaudy daffodils.
And, as the old swain said, she can unlock
The clasping charm, and thaw the numbing spell,
If she be right invoked in warbled song;
For maidenhood she loves, and will be swift
To aid a virgin, such as was herself
In hard-besetting need. This will I try,
And add the pow'r of some adjuring verse.

SONG

Sabrina fair,
  Listen where thou art sitting
Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave,
  In twisted braids of lilies knitting
The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair;
  Listen, for dear honor's sake,
  Goddess of the silver lake;
    Listen, and save!

Listen, and appear to us,
In name of great Oceanus,
By th' earth-shaking Neptune's mace,
And Tethys' grave majestic pace;
By hoary Nereus' wrinkled look,
And the Carpathian wizard's hook;
By scaly Triton's winding shell,
And old soothsaying Glaucus' spell;
By Leucothea's lovely hands,
And her son that rules the strands;
By Thetis' tinsel-slippered feet,
And the songs of Sirens sweet;
By dead Parthenope's dear tomb,
And fair Ligea's golden comb,
Wherewith she sits on diamond rocks,
Sleeking her soft alluring locks;
By all the nymphs that nightly dance
Upon thy streams with wily glance;
Rise, rise, and heave thy rosy head
From thy coral-paven bed,
And bridle in thy headlong wave,
Till thou our summons answered have.
  Listen, and save!

SABRINA *rises, attended by Water-nymphs, and sings:*

By the rushy-fringëd bank,
Where grows the willow and the osier dank,
  My sliding chariot stays,
Thick set with agate, and the azurn sheen
Of turkis blue, and emerald green,
  That in the channel strays:
Whilst from off the waters fleet
Thus I set my printless feet
O'er the cowslip's velvet head,
  That bends not as I tread.
Gentle swain, at thy request
  I am here!

SPIR. Goddess dear,
We implore thy pow'rful hand
To undo the charmëd band
Of true virgin here distressed,
Through the force and through the wile
Of unblessed enchanter vile.
SABR. Shepherd, 'tis my office best
To help insnarëd chastity.—
Brightest Lady, look on me.
Thus I sprinkle on thy breast
Drops that from my fountain pure
I have kept of precious cure;
Thrice upon thy finger's tip;
Thrice upon thy rubied lip:
Next this marble venomed seat,
Smeared with gums of glutinous heat,

[9] drooping. [10] drinking-vessels. [11] malicious.

I touch with chaste palms moist and cold.
Now the spell hath lost his hold;
And I must haste ere morning hour
To wait in Amphitrite's bow'r.
[SABRINA *descends, and the* LADY *rises out of her seat.*

SPIR. Virgin, daughter of Locrine,
Sprung of old Anchises' line,
May thy brimmëd waves for this
Their full tribute never miss
From a thousand petty rills
That tumble down the snowy hills:
Summer drouth or singëd air
Never scorch thy tresses fair,
Nor wet October's torrent flood
Thy molten crystal fill with mud;
May thy billows roll ashore
The beryl and the golden ore;
May thy lofty head be crowned
With many a tow'r and terrace round,
And here and there thy banks upon
With groves of myrrh and cinnamon.—
Come, Lady; while heav'n lends us grace,
Let us fly this cursëd place,
Lest the sorcerer us entice
With some other new device.
Not a waste or needless sound
Till we come to holier ground.
I shall be your faithful guide
Through this gloomy covert wide;
And not many furlongs thence
Is your father's residence,
Where this night are met in state
Many a friend to gratulate
His wished presence; and beside
All the swains that there abide
With jigs and rural dance resort.
We shall catch them at their sport,
And our sudden coming there
Will double all their mirth and cheer.
Come, let us haste; the stars grow high,
But Night sits monarch yet in the mid sky.

SCENE IV

The scene changes, presenting Ludlow Town, and the President's Castle. Country dancers come dancing in; after them the ATTENDANT SPIRIT, *with the two* BROTHERS *and the* LADY.

SONG

SPIR. Back, Shepherds, back! Enough your play
Till next sun-shine holiday.
Here be, without duck or nod,
Other trippings to be trod
Of lighter toes and such court guise
As Mercury did first devise
With the mincing Dryades
On the lawns and on the leas.

[*This second Song presents them to their* FATHER *and* MOTHER.

Noble Lord and Lady bright,
I have brought ye new delight.
Here behold so goodly grown
Three fair branches of your own.
Heav'n hath timely tried their youth,
Their faith, their patience, and their truth,
And sent them here, through hard assays,
With a crown of deathless praise,
To triumph in victorious dance
O'er sensual folly and intemperance.

[*The dances ended, the* SPIRIT *epiloguises.*

SPIR. To the ocean now I fly,
And those happy climes that lie
Where day never shuts his eye,
Up in the broad fields of the sky.
There I suck the liquid air,
All amidst the gardens fair
Of Hesperus, and his daughters three
That sing about the Golden Tree.
Along the crispëd shades and bowers
Revels the spruce and jocund Spring.
The Graces and the rosy-bosomed Hours
Thither all their bounties bring.
There eternal summer dwells;
And west winds with musky wing
About the cedarn alleys fling
Nard and cassia's balmy smells.
Iris there with humid bow
Waters the odorous banks, that blow
Flowers of more mingled hue
Than her purfled[1] scarf can shew,
And drenches with Elysian dew
(List, mortals, if your ears be true)
Beds of hyacinth and roses,
Where young Adonis oft reposes,
Waxing well of his deep wound
In slumber soft; and on the ground
Sadly sits th' Assyrian queen;
But far above in spangled sheen

[1] fringed.

Celestial Cupid, her famed son, advanced,
Holds his dear Psyche sweet entranced,
After her wand'ring labors long,
Till free consent the gods among
Make her his eternal bride;
And from her fair unspotted side
Two blissful twins are to be born,
Youth and Joy; so Jove hath sworn.
But, now my task is smoothly done,
I can fly, or I can run
Quickly to the green earth's end,
Where the bowed welkin[2] slow doth bend;
And from thence can soar as soon
To the corners of the moon.
Mortals, that would follow me,
Love virtue; she alone is free;
She can teach ye how to climb
Higher than the sphery chime;
Or, if virtue feeble were,
Heaven itself would stoop to her.

[2] the curving sky.

A JOVIAL CREW

BY

RICHARD BROME

INTRODUCTION

It can hardly be claimed that Brome's best comedy is a great play; but it is an attractive one, being spirited, jolly, humorous, and entertaining, and written with a gusto and a gaiety that are infectious. The more notable characters are mere presentments of Jonsonian—or, rather, let us say, Dickensian—humors; but, though they are pitched in the key of farce, and though the idiosyncracies of all of them are pushed too far, there is plenty of genuine humor in the conception. The weeping Talboy, with his constant professions of not caring; Mr. Justice Clack, who objects to two speaking at once, and insists on always being the one, with his persistent explanatory phrases that explain nothing, and with his ludicrous ideas of perfunctory justice; the peppery Randal, who has a poor conception of his own honesty, and is perfectly frank in his statement of it: these are all characters imagined in the true comic spirit. So too are some of the scenes—the ludicrous attempts of Vincent and Hilliard to ply the beggars' trade; the calculating courtesy displayed by Oldrents' servants, the discomforts endured by the four counterfeit beggars because neither pair dares to confess disillusionment. The play is written with a great deal of vivacity, and contains some very breezy lyrics. It was first produced the year before the closing of the theatres.

The story is probably Brome's own invention.

CHARACTERS

OLDRENTS, *an ancient esquire.*
HEARTY, *his friend.*
SPRINGLOVE, *steward to Master Oldrents.*
VINCENT, HILLIARD } *two young gentlemen.*
RANDAL, *a groom, Servant to Oldrents.*
MASTER CLACK, *the Justice.*
MASTER SENTWELL, TWO OTHER GENTLEMEN } *friends to Justice Clack.*
OLIVER, *the Justice's son.*
MASTER TALBOY, *lover of the Justice's niece.*
MARTIN, *the Justice's Clerk.*

RACHEL, MERIEL } *Oldrents' daughters.*
AMIE, *Justice Clack's niece.*
CHAPLAIN, USHER, BUTLER, COOK } *to Oldrents.*
AN AUTEM-MORT.
PATRICO, SOLDIER, LAWYER, COURTIER } *four especial beggars.*
SCRIBBLE, *their poet.*
Divers other Beggars, Fiddlers, and Mutes.

PLACE: *England.*

TIME: *Towards the middle of the 17th century.*

A JOVIAL CREW; OR, THE MERRY BEGGARS

PROLOGUE

The title of our play, "A Jovial Crew,"
May seem to promise mirth: which were a new,
And forced thing, in these sad and tragic days,
For you to find, or we express in plays.
We wish you, then, would change that expectation,
Since jovial mirth is now grown out of fashion,
Or much not to expect; for now it chances,
Our comic writer (finding that romances
Of lovers, through much travail and distress,
Till it be thought, no power can redress
Th' afflicted wanderers, though stout chivalry
Lend all his aid for their delivery;
Till, lastly, some impossibility
Concludes all strife, and makes a comedy),
Finding (he says) such stories bear the sway,
Near as he could, he has composed a play,
Of fortune-tellers, damsels, and their squires,
Exposed to strange adventures, through the briars
Of Love and Fate. But why need I forestall
What shall so soon be obvious to all?
But wish the dullness may make no man sleep,
Nor sadness of it any woman weep.

ACT ONE

OLDRENTS *has been greatly upset by the prediction of a Fortune-teller that his daughters will prove beggars. He has told* HEARTY *about it, and receives little sympathy but a good deal of common sense. The scene is the grounds of* OLDRENTS' *house. At the back is a barn, which occupies the rear stage, the interior of which is at present shut from view.*

OLD. It has indeed, friend, much afflicted me.
HEA. And very justly, let me tell you, sir,
That could so impiously be curious
To tempt a judgment on you; to give ear,
And faith too (by your leave) to fortune-tellers,
Wizards and gipsies!
OLD. I have since been frighted
With't in a thousand dreams.
HEA. I would be drunk
A thousand times to bed, rather than dream
Of any of their Riddlemy Riddlemies.
If they prove happy, so: if not, let't go;
You'll never find their meaning till the event,
If you suppose there was, at all, a meaning,
As the equivocating Devil had, when he
Cozened the Monk, to let him live soul-free,
Till he should find him sleeping between sheets:

The wary Monk, abjuring all such lodging,
At last, by over-watching in his study,
The foul fiend took him napping with his nose
Betwixt the sheet-leaves of his conjuring book.
There was the whim, or double meaning on it.
But these fond fortune-tellers, that know nothing,
Aim to be thought more cunning than their master,
The foresaid Devil, though truly not so hurtful:
Yet trust 'em! hang 'em! wizards! old blind buzzards!
For once they hit, they miss a thousand times;
And most times give quite contrary, bad for good,
And best for worst. One told a gentleman
His son would be a man-killer and hanged for't,
Who after proved a great and rich physician,
And, with great fame i' th' University,
Hanged up in picture for a grave example.
There was the whim of that. Quite contrary!

Old. And that was happy: would mine could so deceive my fears!

Hea. They may: but trust not to't. Another chemist
Found that a squint-eyed boy should prove a notable
Pick-purse, and afterwards a most strong thief;
When he grew up to be a cunning lawyer,
And at last died a judge. Quite contrary!
How many have been marked out by these wizards
For fools, that after have been pricked for sheriffs?
Was not a shepherd-boy foretold to be
A drunkard, and to get his living from
Bawds, whores, thieves, quarrellers, and the like?
And did he not become a superb justice
And live in wine and worship by the fees
Racked out of such delinquents? There's the whim on't.
Now I come to you: your finger-flinger finds
That both your daughters, notwithstanding all
Your great possessions, which they are co-heirs of,
Shall yet be beggars: may it not be meant,
(If, as I said, there be a meaning in it)
They may prove courtiers, or great courtiers' wives,
And so be beggars in law? Is not that
The whim on't, think you? You shall think no worse on't.

Old. Would I had your merry heart.

Hea. I thank you, sir.

Old. I mean the like.

Hea. I would you had; and I,
Such an estate as yours. Four thousand yearly,
With such a heart as mine, would defy Fortune,
And all her babbling soothsayers. I'd as soon
Distrust in Providence as lend a fear
To such a destiny for a child of mine,
While there be sack and song in town or country.
Think like a man of conscience (now I am serious):
What justice can there be for such a curse
To fall upon your heirs? Do you not live
Free, out of law or grieving any man?
Are you not the only rich man lives unenvied?
Have you not all the praises of the rich,
And the prayers of the poor? Did ever any
Servant or hireling, neighbor, kindred curse you,
Or wish one minute shortened of your life?
Have you one grudging tenant? will they not all

Fight for you? Do they not teach their children,
And make 'em too, pray for you morn and evening,
And in their graces too as duly as
For King and Realm? The innocent things would think
They ought not [to] eat else.
OLD. 'Tis your goodness.
HEA. It is your merit. Your great love and bounty
Procures from heaven those inspirations in 'em.
Whose rent did ever you exact? whose have
You not remitted, when by casualties
Of fire, of floods, of common dearth, or sickness,
Poor men were brought behindhand? Nay, whose losses
Have you not piously repaired?
OLD. Enough.
HEA. What hariots have you ta'en from forlorn widows?
What acres of your thousands have you racked?
OLD. Good friend, no more.
HEA. These are enough, indeed,
To fill your ears with joyful acclamations
Where'er you pass: "Heaven bless our landlord Oldrents;
Our master Oldrents: our good patron Oldrents."
Cannot these sounds conjure that evil spirit
Of fear out of you, that your children shall
Live to be beggars? Shall Squire Oldrents' daughters
Wear old rents in their garments (there's a whim too),
Because a fortune-teller told you so?
OLD. Come, I will strive to think no more on't.
HEA. Will you ride forth for air then, and be merry?
OLD. Your counsel and example may instruct me.
HEA. Sack must be had in sundry places too;
For songs I am provided.

Enter SPRINGLOVE *with books and papers, which he lays on the table.*

OLD. <Yet here comes one brings me a second fear,
Who has my care the next unto my children.>
HEA. Your steward, sir, it seems has business with you.
I wish you would have none.
OLD. I'll soon dispatch it:
And then be for our journey instantly.
HEA. I'll wait your coming down, sir. [*Exit.*
OLD. But why, Springlove,
Is now this expedition?
SPR. Sir, 'tis duty.
OLD. Not common among stewards, I confess,
To urge in their accounts before the day
Their lords have limited. Some that are grown
To hoary hairs and knighthoods are not found
Guilty of such an importunity.
'Tis yet but thirty days, when I give forty
After the half-year day, our Lady last.
Could I suspect my trust were lost in thee,
Or doubt thy youth had not ability
To carry out the weight of such a charge,
I, then, should call on thee.
SPR. Sir, your indulgence,
I hope, shall ne'er corrupt me. Ne'ertheless,
The testimony of a fair discharge
From time to time will be encouragement
To virtue in me. [SPRINGLOVE *turns over the several books to his master.*
You may then be pleased
To take here a survey of all your rents
Received, and all such other payments as
Came to my hands since my last audit for
Cattle, wool, corn, all fruits of husbandry.
Then, my receipts on bonds, and some new leases,

With some old debts, and almost desperate ones,
As well from country cavaliers as courtiers.
Then, here, sir, are my several disbursements,
In all particulars, for yourself and daughters,
In charge of housekeeping, buildings, and repairs;
Journeys, apparel, coaches, gifts, and all
Expenses for your personal necessaries.
Here, servants' wages, liveries, and cures.
Here for supplies of horses, hawks, and hounds.
And lastly, not the least to be remembered,
Your large benevolences to the poor.
OLD. Thy charity there goes hand in hand with mine;
And, Springlove, I commend it in thee, that,
So young in years, art grown so ripe in goodness.
May their heaven-piercing prayers bring on thee
Equal rewards with me.
SPR. Now here, sir, is
The balance of the several accounts,
Which shews you what remains in cash; which, added
Unto your former bank, makes up in all—
OLD. Twelve thousand and odd pounds.
SPR. Here are the keys
Of all; the chests are safe in your own closet.
OLD. Why in my closet? is not yours safe?
SPR. O, sir, you know my suit?
OLD. Your suit? What suit?
SPR. Touching the time of year.
OLD. 'Tis well-nigh May.
Why, what of that, good Springlove?
[*Nightingale sings without.*
SPR. O, sir, you hear I am called.
OLD. Fie, Springlove, fie.
I hoped thou hadst abjured that uncouth practice.
SPR. You thought I had forsaken Nature then.
OLD. Is that disease of Nature still in thee
So virulent? and, notwithstanding all
My favors, in my gifts, my cares and counsels,
Which to a soul ingrateful might be boasted:
Have I first bred thee, and then preferred thee (from
I will not say how wretched a beginning)
To be a master over all my servants;
Planted thee in my bosom; and canst thou,
There, slight me for the whistling of a bird?
SPR. Your reason, sir, informs you, that's no cause.
But 'tis the season of the year that calls me:
What moves her notes provokes my disposition
By a more absolute power of Nature than
Philosophy can render an account for.
OLD. I find there's no expelling it; but still
It will return. I have tried all the means
(As I may safely think) in human wisdom,
And did (as near as reason could) assure me,
That thy last year's restraint had stopped forever
That running sore on thee, that gadding humor:
When, only for that cause, I laid the weight
Of mine estate in stewardship upon thee;
Which kept thee in that year, after so many
Summer vagaries thou hadst made before.
SPR. You kept a swallow in a cage that while.
I cannot, sir, endure another summer
In that restraint, with life: 'twas then my torment;
But now, my death. Yet, sir, my life is yours,
Who are my patron; freely may you take it.
Yet pardon, sir, my frailty, that do beg
A small continuance of it on my knees.

Old. Can there no means be found to preserve life
In thee, but wandering, like a vagabond?
Does not the sun as comfortably shine
Upon my gardens as the opener fields?
Or on my fields, as others far remote?
Are not my walks and greens as delectable
As the highwáys and commons? Are the shades
Of sycamore and bowers of eglantine
Less pleasing than of bramble or thorn hedges?
Or of my groves and thickets, than wild woods?
Are not my fountain waters fresher than
The troubled streams where every beast does drink?
Do not the birds sing here as sweet and lively
As any other where? is not thy bed more soft?
And rest more safe than in a field or barn?
Is a full table, which is called thine own,
Less curious or wholesome than the scraps
From others' trenchers, twice or thrice translated?
Spr. Yea, in the winter season, when the fire
Is sweeter than the air.
Old. What air is wanting?
Spr. O sir, y'have heard of pilgrimages; and
The voluntary travels of good men.
Old. For penance, or to holy ends; but bring
Not those into comparison, I charge you.
Spr. I do not, sir. But pardon me to think
Their sufferings are much sweetened by delights,
Such as we find by shifting place and air.
Old. Are there delights in beggary? Or, if to take
Diversity of air be such a solace,
Travel the kingdom over: and, if this
Yield not variety enough, try further,
Provided your deportment be genteel:
Take horse and man and money: you have all,
Or I'll allow enough. [*A nightingale, a cuckoo, and other birds are heard singing.*
Spr. O how am I confounded!
Dear sir, retort[1] me naked to the world
Rather than lay those burdens on me which
Will stifle me: I must abroad or perish.
Old. <I will no longer strive to wash this Moor,
Nor breathe more minutes so unthriftily
In civil argument against rude wind,
But rather practice to withdraw my love
And tender care (if it be possible)
From that unfruitful breast, incapable
Of wholesome counsel.>
Spr. Have I your leave, sir?
Old. I leave you to dispute it with yourself:
I have no voice to bid you go, or stay:
My love shall give thy will pre-eminence,
And leave the effect to Time and Providence. [*Exit.*
Spr. I am confounded in my obligation
To this good man: his virtue is my punishment,
When 'tis not in my nature to return
Obedience to his merits. I could wish
Such an ingratitude were death by th' law
And put in present execution on me,
To rid me of my sharper suffering.
Nor, but by death, can this predominant sway
Of nature be extinguished in me. I
Have fought with my affections, by the assistance
Of all the strengths of Art and Discipline
(All which I owe him for in education too)
To conquer and establish my observance
(As in all other rules) to him in this,
This inborn strong desire of liberty
In that free course which he detests as shameful;
And I approve my earth's felicity,
But find the war is endless, and must fly.

[1] return.

What must I lose then? A good master's love.
What loss feels he that wants not [440
what he loses?
They'll say I lose all reputatiön.
What's that, to live where no such thing
is known?
My duty to a master will be questioned.
Where duty is exacted, it is none;
And, among beggars, each man is his own.

Enter from the barn RANDAL *and three or four Servants with a great kettle and black jacks and a baker's basket, all empty. All, with the exception of* RANDAL, *cross the stage and go out.* [452

Now, fellows, what news from whence
you came?

RAN. The old wonted news, sir, from your guest-house, the old barn. We have unloaden the bread-basket, the beef-kettle, and the beer-bumbards there, amongst your guests, the beggars. And they have all prayed for you and our [460 master, from the teeth outward; marry, from the teeth inwards 'tis enough to swallow your alms; from whence I think their prayers seldom come.

SPR. Thou should'st not think uncharitably.

RAN. Thought's free, Master Steward, and it please you. But your charity is nevertheless notorious, I must needs say.

SPR. Meritorious, thou meanest to say.

RAN. Surely sir, no; 'tis out of our curate's book. [472

SPR. But I aspire no merits, nor popular thanks,
'Tis well if I do well in it.

RAN. It might be better though (if old Randal, whom you allow to talk, might counsel) to help to breed up poor men's children, or decayed laborers past their work or travel; or towards the setting [480 up of poor young married couples; than to bestow an hundred pound a year (at least you do that, if not all you get), besides our master's bounty, to maintain in begging such wanderers as these, that never are out of their way; that cannot give account from whence they came, or whither they would, nor of any beginning they ever had, or any end they seek, but still to stroll and beg till their bellies be full, and then sleep till they be [491 hungry.

SPR. Thou art ever repining at those poor people! they take nothing from thee but thy pains: and that I pay thee for too. Why should'st thou grudge?

RAN. Am I not bitten to it every day, by the six-footed blood-hounds that they leave in their litter, when I throw out the old, to lay fresh straw for the new- [500 comers at night? That's one part of my office. And you are sure that, though your hospitality be but for a night and a morning for one rabble, to have a new supply every evening. They take nothing from me indeed; they give too much.

SPR. Thou art old Randal still! ever grumbling, but still officious for 'em.

RAN. Yes: hang 'em! they know I love 'em well enough; I have had merry bouts with some of 'em. [511

SPR. What say'st thou, Randal?

RAN. They are indeed my pastime. I left the merry griggs (as their provender has pricked 'em) in such a hoigh yonder! such a frolic! you'll hear anon, as you walk nearer 'em.

SPR. Well, honest Randal, thus it is: I am for a journey. I know not how long will be my absence; but I will presently take order with the cook, pantler, and butler, for my wonted allowance to [522 the poor; and I will leave money with thee to manage the affair till my return.

RAN. Then up rise Randal, baily of the beggars!

SPR. And if our master shall be displeased (although the charge be mine) at the openness of the entertainment, thou shalt then give it proportionably in [530 money, and let them walk further.

RAN. Pfeugh! that will never do't, never do 'em good: 'tis the seat, the habitation, the rendezvous, that cheers their hearts. Money would clog their consciences. Nor must I lose the music of 'em in their lodging.

Spr. We will agree upon't anon. Go now about your business.

Ran. I go. Baily? nay, steward and chamberlain of the rogues and beggars. [*Exit.*

Spr. I cannot think but with a trembling fear
On this adventure, in a scruple which
I have not weighed with all my other doubts.
I shall, in my departure, rob my master:
Of what? of a true servant; other theft
I have committed none. And that may be supplied,
And better too, by some more constant to him.
But I may injure many in his trust,
Which now he cannot be but sparing of.
I rob him too, of the content and hopes
He had in me, whom he had built and raised
Unto that growth in his affectiön
That I became a gladness in his eye,
And now must be a grief or a vexation
Unto his noble heart. [*A noise and singing within.*] But hark! Ay, there's
The harmony that drowns all doubts and fears.
A little nearer—

Song, *within.*

From hunger and cold who lives more free,
Or who more richly clad than we?
Our bellies are full; our flesh is warm;
And, against pride, our rags are a charm.
Enough is our feast, and, for to-morrow,
Let rich men care, we feel no sorrow.
No sorrow, no sorrow, no sorrow, no sorrow;
Let rich men care, we feel no sorrow.

Spr. The emperor hears no such music; nor feels content like this!

Song, *within.*

Each city, each town, and every village
Affords us either an alms or pillage;
And, if the weather be cold and raw,
Then in a barn we tumble in straw.
If warm and fair, by yea-cock and nay-cock,
The fields will afford us a hedge or a hay-cock.
A hay-cock, a hay-cock, a hay-cock, a hay-cock.
The fields will afford us a hedge or a hay-cock.

Spr. Most ravishing delight! But, in all this
Only one sense is pleased: mine ear is feasted.
Mine eye too must be satisfied with my joys.
The hoarding usurer cannot have more
Thirsty desire to see his golden store,
When he unlocks his treasury, than I
The equipage in which my beggars lie.

He throws open the doors of the barn, displaying the Beggars *in various postures. They come forth from the barn, the last to appear being the* Patrico.

All. Our master! our master! our sweet and comfortable master!

Spr. How cheer my hearts?

1 Beg. Most crowse,[2] most caperingly. Shall we dance, shall we sing, to welcome our king?
Strike up, piper, a merry, merry dance
That we on our stampers may foot it and prance,
To make his heart merry, as he has made ours;
As lustick and frolic as lords in their bowers. [*Music and dance.*

Spr. Exceeding well performed!

1 Beg. 'Tis well if it like you, master. But we have not that rag among us that we will not dance off, to do you service, we being all and only your servants, most noble sir. Command us, therefore, and employ us, we beseech you.

Spr. Thou speak'st most courtly.

2 Beg. Sir, he can speak, and could have writ as well. He is a decayed poet, newly fallen in among us; and begs as well as the best of us. He learnt it pretty well in his own profession before; and can the better practice it in ours now.

Spr. Thou art a wit too, it seems.

3 Beg. He should have wit and knavery too, sir: for he was an attorney, till he was pitched over the bar; and, from that fall, he was taken up a Knight o' the Post; and so he continued till he was degraded

[2] merry.

at the whipping-post; and from thence he ran resolutely into this course. His cunning in the law, and the other's labor with the Muses are dedicate to your service; and, for myself, I'll fight for you.

Spr. Thou art a brave fellow, and speak'st like a commander. Hast thou borne arms?

4 Beg., *who has but one leg*. Sir, he has borne the name of a Netherland soldier, till he ran away from his colors, and was taken lame with lying in the fields by a sciatica; I mean, sir, the strapado; after which, by a second retreat—indeed, running away—he scambled into his country, and so scaped the gallows, and then snapped up his living in the city by his wit in cheating, pimping, and such-like arts, till the cart and the pillory shewed him too publicly to the world; and so, begging being the last refuge, he entered into our society, and lives honestly, I must say, as the best of us.

Spr. Thou speak'st good language too.

1 Beg. He was a courtier born, sir, and begs on pleasure, I assure you, refusing great and constant means from able friends to make him a staid man; yet (the want of a leg notwithstanding) he must travel in this kind against all common reason, by the special policy of Providence.

Spr. As how, I prethee?

1 Beg. His father, sir, was a courtier—a great court beggar, I assure you. I made these verses of him and his son here:

"A courtier begged by covetise, not need,
From others that which made them beg indeed.
He begged, till wealth had laden him with cares
To keep for's children and their children shares,
While the oppressed, that lost that great estate
Sent curses after it unto their fate.
The father dies (the world says) very rich;
The son, being gotten while (it seems) the itch
Of begging was upon the courtly sire,
Or bound by Fate, will to no wealth aspire,
Though offered him in money, clothes, or meat,
More than he begs, or instantly must eat.
Is not he heavenly blest that hates earth's treasure
And begs, with 'What's a gentleman but's pleasure?'
Or, say it be upon the heir a curse;
What's that to him? The beggar's ne'er the worse;
For, of the general store that Heaven has sent,
He values not a penny till't be spent."

All. A Scribble, a Scribble!

2 Beg. What city or court poet could say more than our hedge muse-monger here?

3 Beg. What say you, sir, to our poet Scribble here?

Spr. I like his vein exceeding well; and the whole consort of you.

2 Beg. "Consort," sir? We have musicians too among us; true merry beggars indeed, that, being within the reach of the lash for singing libellous songs at London, were fain to fly into our covey; and here they sing all our poet's ditties. They can sing anything most tunably, sir, but the Psalms. What they may do hereafter under a triple tree is much expected; but they live very civilly and gently among us.

Spr. But what is he there, that solemn old fellow that neither speaks of himself nor anybody for him?

2 Beg. O sir, the rarest man of all. He is a prophet. See how he holds up his prognosticating nose. He is divining now.

Spr. How? a prophet?

2 Beg. Yes, sir, a cunning man and a fortune-teller: 'tis thought he was a great clerk before his decay; but he is very close, will not tell his beginning, nor the fortune he himself is fallen from; but he serves us for a clergyman still, and marries us, if need be, after a new way of his own.

Spr. How long have you had his company? [741

2 Beg. But lately come amongst us, but a very ancient stroll all the land over, and has travelled with gipsies, and is a Patrico. Shall he read your fortune, sir?

Spr. If it please him.

Pat. Lend me your hand, sir.

By this palm I understand,
Thou art born to wealth and land,
And after many a bitter gust, [750
Shalt build with thy greatgrandsire's dust.

Spr. Where shall I find it? but come, I'll not trouble my head with the search.

2 Beg. What say you, sir, to our crew? are we not well congregated?

Spr. You are a jovial crew; the only people whose happiness I admire.

3 Beg. Will you make us happy in serving you? have you any enemies? shall we fight under you? will you be our captain?

2 Beg. Nay, our king. [761

3 Beg. Command us something, sir.

Spr. Where's the next rendezvous?

1 Beg. Neither in village nor in town: But three miles off at Maple-down.

Spr. At evening there I'll visit you.

Beggars, *singing*.

Come, come, away! the Spring
By every bird that can sing,
Or chirp a note doth now invite [770
Us forth to taste of his delight.
In field, in grove, on hill, in dale;
But, above all, the nightingale,
Who in her sweetness strives t' out-do
The loudness of the hoarse cuckoo.
"Cuckoo," cries he, "Jug, jug, jug," sings she,
From bush to bush, from tree to tree,
Why in one place, then, tarry we?

Come away; why do we stay? [780
We have no debt or rent to pay.
No bargains or accounts to make;
Nor land or lease to let or take:
Or, if we had, should that remore us,
When all the world's our own before us?
And, where we pass, and make resort,
It is our kingdom and our court.
"Cuckoo," cries he, &c.

[*Exeunt, singing*.

Spr. So, now away! [790
They dream of happiness that live in state;
But they enjoy it that obey their fate.

ACT TWO

Scene I

Rachel *and* Meriel *are with their lovers,* Vincent *and* Hilliard, *in their father's grounds. Though they enjoy great personal liberty, they are envious of the absolute freedom of the beggars' life.*

Vin. I am overcome with admiration[1] at the felicity they take!

Hil. Beggars! They are the only people can boast the benefit of a free state, in the full enjoyment of liberty, [10 mirth, and ease, having all things in common, and nothing wanting of nature's whole provision within the reach of their desires. Who would have lost this sight of their revels?

Vin. How think you, ladies? Are they not the only happy in the nation?

Mer. Happier than we, I'm sure, that are pent up and tied by the nose to the continual steam of hot hospitality, [20 here in our father's house, when they have the air at pleasure in all variety.

Ra. And, though I know we have merrier spirits than they, yet to live thus confined stifles us.

Hil. Why, ladies, you have liberty enough, or may take what you please.

Mer. Yes, in our father's rule and government, or by his allowance. What's that to absolute freedom, such as the [30 very beggars have? to feast and revel here to-day and yonder to-morrow; next day where they please; and so on still, the whole country or kingdom over! There's liberty! the birds of the air can take no more.

Ra. And then at home here, or wheresoever he comes, our father is so pensive (what muddy spirit soe'er possesses him, would I could conjure it out) that he [40 makes us even sick of his sadness, that we're wont to see my gossip's cock to-day, mould cocklebread, dance clutterdepouch and hannykin-booby, bind barrels, or do any thing before him, and he would laugh at us.

Mer. Now he looks upon us, but with

[1] wonder.

a sigh or tears in his eyes, though we simper never so sanctifiedly. What tales have been told of us, or what he [50 suspects, I know not: God forgive him; I do; but I am weary of his house.

Ra. Does he think us whores, trow, because sometimes we talk as lightly as great ladies? I can swear safely for the virginity of one of us, so far as word and deed goes; marry, thought's free.

Mer. Which is that one of us, I pray? yourself or me? [59

Ra. Good sister Meriel, charity begins at home. But I'll swear I think as charitably of thee, and not only because thou art a year younger neither.

Mer. I am beholden to you; but, for my father, I would I knew his grief and how to cure him, or that we were where we could not see it. It spoils our mirth; and that has been better than his meat to us. [69

Vin. Will you hear our motion, ladies?

Mer. Pfeugh! you would marry us presently out of his way, because he has given you a foolish kind of promise; but we will see him in a better humor first, and as apt to laugh as we to lie down, I warrant him.

Hil. 'Tis like that course will cure him, would you embrace it.

Ra. We will have him cured first, I tell you; and you shall wait that season and our leisure. [81

Mer. I will rather hazard my being one of the devil's ape-leaders than to marry while he is melancholy.

Ra. Or I to stay in his house, to give entertainment to this knight or t'other coxcomb that comes to cheer him up with eating of his cheer, when we must fetch 'em sweetmeats, and they must tell us, "ladies, your lips are sweeter," and [90 then fall into courtship, one in a set speech taken out of old Breton's works, another with verses out of "The Academy of Compliments," or some or other of the new poetical pamphleteers, ambitious only to spoil paper and publish their names in print; and then to be kissed, and sometimes slavered. Faugh!

Mer. 'Tis not to be endured. We must out of the house. We cannot live [100 but by laughing, and that aloud, and nobody sad within hearing.

Vin. We are for any adventure with you, ladies. Shall we project a journey for you? your father has trusted you, and will think you safe in our company; and we would fain be abroad upon some progress with you. Shall we make a fling to London, and see how the spring appears there in the Spring-garden; and [110 in Hyde Park, to see the races, horse and foot; to hear the jockeys crack; and see the Adamites run naked afore the ladies?

Ra. We have seen all already there, as well as they, last year.

Hil. But there ha' been new plays since.

Ra. No: no; we are not for London.

Hil. What think you of a journey to the Bath then? [120

Ra. Worse than t'other way. I love not to carry my health where others drop their diseases. There's no sport i' that.

Vin. Will you up to the hill-top of sports, then, and merriments—Dover's Olympics or the Cotswold Games?

Mer. No; that will be too public for our recreation. We would have it more within ourselves. [130

Hil. Think of some course yourselves then. We are for you upon any way, as far as horse and money can carry us.

Vin. Ay, and, if those means fail us, as far as our pegs can bear, or our hands can help us.

Ra. And we will put you to't.—Come aside, Meriel. [*The two girls step aside.*

Vin. <Some jeer, perhaps, to put upon us. [140

Hil. What think you of a pilgrimage to St. Winifred's Well?

Vin. Or a journey to the wise woman at Nantwich, to ask if we be fit husbands for 'em?

Hil. They are not scrupulous in that, we having had their growing loves up from our childhoods; and the old Squire's good will before all men.>

RA. AND MER. Ha, ha, ha! [150

VIN. <What's the conceit, I marvel?>

RA. AND MER. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

HIL. <Some merry one it seems.>

RA. And, then sirrah Meriel, hark again —ha, ha, ha! [*The girls whisper again.*

VIN. <How they are taken with it!>

MER. Ha, ha, ha—hark again, Rachel. [*Again they whisper.*

HIL. <Some wonderful nothing, sure. They will laugh as much to see a swallow fly with a white feather imped in her tail.

VIN. They were born laughing, I [162 think.>

RA. AND MER. Ha, ha, ha!

VIN. <If it be not some trick upon us, which they'll discover in some monstrous shape, they cozen me.> Now, ladies, is your project ripe? possess us with the knowledge of it. [169

RA. It is more precious than to be imparted upon a slight demand.

HIL. Pray let us hear it. You know we are your trusty servants.

VIN. And have kept all your counsels ever since we have been infant playfellows.

RA. Yes, you have played at all kinds of small game with us; but this is to the purpose. Ha, ha, ha!

HIL. It seems so by your laughing. [180

RA. And asks a stronger tongue-tie than tearing of books, burning of samplers, making dirtpies, or piss and paddle in't.

VIN. You know how and what we have vowed: to wait upon you any way, any how, and any whither.

MER. And you will stand to't?

HIL. Ay, and go to't with you, wherever it be. [190

MER. Pray tell't 'em, sister Rachel.

RA. Why, gentlemen—ha, ha!—Thus it is—Tell it you, Meriel.

VIN. O, is that all?

MER. You are the elder. Pray, tell it you.

RA. You are the younger. I command you to tell it. Come, out with it! They long to have it.

HIL. When? [200

VIN. When?

MER. In troth, you must tell it, sister; I cannot. Pray, begin.

RA. Then, gentlemen, stand your ground.

VIN. Some terrible business, sure.

RA. You seemed e'en now to admire the felicity of beggars.

MER. And have engaged yourselves to join with us in any course. [210

RA. Will you now with us, and for our sakes turn beggars?

MER. It is our resolution, and our injunction on you.

RA. But for a time and a short progress.

MER. And for a spring-trick of youth, now in the season.

VIN. Beggars! What rogues are these?

HIL. A simple trial of our loves and service! [220

RA. Are you resolved upon't? If not, God be w' y'! We are resolved to take our course.

MER. Let yours be to keep counsel.

VIN. Stay, stay. Beggars! Are we not so already?

Do we not beg your loves and your enjoyings?

Do we not beg to be received your servants, [230

To kiss your hands, or (if you will vouchsafe)

Your lips, or your embraces?

HIL. We now beg,

That we may fetch the rings and priest to marry us.

Wherein are we no beggars?

RA. That will not serve. Your time's not come for that yet.

You shall beg victuals first. [240

VIN. O, I conceive your begging progress is to ramble out this summer among your father's tenants; and 'tis in request among gentlemen's daughters to devour their cheese cakes, apple pies, cream and custards, flapjacks, and pan puddings.

MER. Not so, not so!

HIL. Why, so we may be a kind of civil beggars.

RA. I mean stark, errant, downright beggars, I, [251

Without equivocation; statute beggars!
MER. Couchant and passant, guardant, rampant beggars.
VIN. Current and vagrant.
HIL. Stockant, whippant beggars!
VIN. Must you and we be such? would you so have it?
RA. Such as we saw so merry; and you concluded [260
Were the only happy people in a nation.
MER. The only freemen of a commonwealth;
Free above Scot-free; that observe no law,
Obey no governor, use no religion,
But what they draw from their own ancient custom,
Or constitute themselves, yet are no rebels. [270
RA. Such as of all men's meat and all men's money
Take a free part; and, wheresoe'er they travel,
Have all things gratis to their hands provided.
VIN. Coarse fare most times.
RA. Their stomach makes it good,
And feasts on that which others scorn for food. [280
MER. The antidote, content, is only theirs;
And, unto that, such full delights are known
That they conceive the kingdom is their own.
VIN. <'Fore Heaven, I think they are in earnest: for they were always mad.
HIL. And we were madder than they, if we should lose 'em. [290
VIN. 'Tis but a mad trick of youth (as they say) for the spring, or a short progress; and mirth may be made out of it, knew we how to carry it.>
RA. Pray, gentlemen, be sudden.
[*A cuckoo is heard singing.*
Hark, you hear the cuckoo.
HIL. We are most resolutely for you in your course.
VIN. But the vexation is, how to [300 set it on foot.
RA. We have projected it. Now, if you be perfect and constant lovers and friends, search you the means. <We have puzzled 'em.
MER. I am glad on't. Let 'em pump.>
VIN. Troth, a small stock will serve to set up withal. This doublet, sold off o' my back, might serve to furnish a camp royal of us. [310
HIL. But how to enter or arrange ourselves into the crew will be the difficulty. If we light raw and tame amongst 'em (like cage birds among a flight of wild ones), we shall never pick up a living, but have our brains pecked out.
VIN. We want instruction dearly.
HIL. O, here comes Springlove! His great benefactorship among the beggars might prefer us with authority into [320 a ragged regiment presently. Shall I put it to him?
RA. Take heed what you do. His greatness with my father will betray us.

Enter SPRINGLOVE.

VIN. I will cut his throat then.—My noble Springlove, the great commander of the maunders and king of canters, we saw the gratitude of your loyal subjects in the large tributary content they gave you in their revels. [331
SPR. Did you, sir?
HIL. We have seen all with great delight and admiration.
SPR. I have seen you too, kind gentlemen and ladies;
And overheard you in your quaint design
To new-create yourselves out of the worldly blessings
And spiritual graces Heaven has bestowed upon you, [341
To be partakers and co-actors too,
In those vile courses, which you call delights,
Ta'en by those despicable and abhorrëd creatures.
VIN. Thou art a despiser, nay, a blasphemer
Against the Maker of those happy creatures, [350
Who, of all human, have priority
In their content, in which they are so blest

That they enjoy most in possessing least.
Who made 'em such, dost think? or why so happy?

Ra. He grows zealous in the cause: sure, he'll beg indeed.

Hil. Art thou an hypocrite, then, all this while?
Only pretending charity; or using it
To get a name and praise unto thyself;
And not to cherish and increase those creatures,
In their most happy way of living? Or
Dost thou bestow thine alms with a foul purpose
To stint[2] their begging, and with loss to buy
And slave those free souls from their liberty?

Mer. <They are more zealous in the cause than we.>

Spr. But are you, ladies, at defiance too
With reputation and the dignity
Due to your father's house and you?

Ra. Hold thy peace, good Springlove, and, though you seem to dislike this course, and reprove us for it, do not betray us in it: your throat's in question. I tell you for good will, good Springlove.

Mer. What wouldst thou have us do? thou talkst o' th' house: 'tis a base melancholy house: our father's sadness banishes us out on't; and, for the delight thou tak'st in beggars and their brawls, thou canst not but think they live a better life abroad than we do in this house.

Spr. I have sounded your faith; and I am glad I find you all right. And, for your father's sadness, I'll tell you the cause on't. I overheard it but this day in his private discourse with his merry mate, Master Hearty: he has been told by some wizard that you both were born to be beggars.

All. How, how?

Spr. For which he is so tormented in mind that he cannot sleep in peace, nor look upon you but with heart's grief.

Vin. This is most strange.

Ra. Let him be grieved then, till we are beggars,
We have just reason to become so now;
And, what we thought on but in jest before,
We'll do in earnest now.

Spr. O, I applaud this resolution in you; would have persuaded it; will be your servant in't; for, look ye, ladies: the sentence of your fortune does not say that you shall beg for need—hunger, or cold necessity. If therefore you expose yourselves on pleasure into it, you shall absolve your destiny nevertheless and cure your father's grief. I am overjoyed to think on't, and will assist you faithfully.

All. A Springlove! A Springlove!

Spr. I am prepared already for the adventure,
And will with all conveniencies furnish
And set you forth; give you your dimensions,
Rules, and directions: I will be your guide,
Your guard, your convoy, your authority.
You do not know my power, my command
I' th' beggars' commonwealth.

Vin. But how? But how, good Springlove?

Spr. I'll confess all. In my minority
My master took me up a naked beggar;
Bred me at school; then took me to his service
(You know in what good fashion); and you may
Collect to memory for seven late summers,
Either by leave, pretending friends to see
At far remote parts of the land, or else
By stealth, I would absent myself from service,
To follow my own pleasure, which was begging,
Led to't by nature. My indulgent master
(Yet ignorant of my course) on my submission,
When cold and hunger forced me back at winter,

[2] stop.

Received me still again; till, two years since,
He being drawn by journey towards the north,
Where I then quartered with a ragged crew,
On the highway, not dreaming of [460 him there,
I did accost him, with a "Good your worship,
The gift of one small penny to a cripple"
(For here I was with him), "and the good Lord
To bless you, and restore it you in heaven."

ALL. Ha, ha, ha.

SPR. My head was dirty-clouted, [470 and this leg
Swaddled with rags, the other naked, and
My body clad, like his upon the gibbet;
Yet he, with searching eyes, through all my rags
And counterfeit[ed] postures, made discovery
Of this man Springlove; chid me into tears
And a confession of my forespent life.
At last, upon condition that vagary [481
Should be the last, he gave me leave to run
That summer out. In autumn home came I
In my home clothes again and former duty.
My master not alone conserved my counsel,
But lays more weighty trust and charge upon me; [491
Such was his love to keep me a homeman,
That he conferred his steward's place upon me,
Which clogged me, the last year, from those delights
I would not lose again to be his lord.

ALL. A Springlove, a Springlove!

SPR. Pursue the course you are on then, as cheerfully [501
As the inviting season smiles upon you.
Think how you are necessitated to it,
To quit your father's sadness and his fears
Touching your fortune. Till you have been beggars
The sword hangs over him. You cannot think
Upon an act of greater piety [510
Unto your father, than t' expose yourselves,
Brave volunteers, unpressed by common need
Into this meritorious warfare; whence
(After a few days or short season spent)
You bring him a perpetual peace and joy
By expiating the prophecy that torments him.
'Twere worth your time in painful, [520 woeful steps,
With your lives' hazard, in a pilgrimage,
So to redeem a father; but you'll find
A progress of such pleasure (as I'll govern't)
That the most happy courts could never boast
In all their tramplings on the country's co[a]st,
Whose envy we shall draw, when [530 they shall read
We outbeg them, and for as little need.

ALL. A Springlove! a Springlove!

SPR. Follow me, gallants, then, as cheerfully [*Birds sing.*
As—(hark!) we are summoned forth.

ALL. We follow thee. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II

RANDAL *is greatly delighted with the duties imposed upon him by* SPRINGLOVE. *He is outside the barn, with a purse in his hand.*

RAN. Well, go thy ways. If ever any just or charitable steward was commended, sure thou shalt be at the last quarter-day. Here's five-and-twenty pounds for this quarter's beggar-charge; and, if he return not by the end of this [10 quarter, here's order to a friend to supply for the next. If I now should venture for the commendation of an unjust steward, and turn this money to mine own use! Ha! dear devil, tempt me not! I'll do

thee service in a greater matter; but to rob the poor! a poor trick: every churchwarden can do't. Now something whispers me that my master, for his steward's love, will supply the poor, as I may [20 handle the matter. Then I rob the steward, if I restore him not the money at his return. Away, temptation, leave me! I am frail flesh: yet I will fight with thee. —But say the steward never return.— O, but he will return.—Perhaps he may not return.—Turn from me, Satan: strive not to clog my conscience. I would not have this weight upon't for all thy kingdom. [30

Enter HEARTY *and* OLDRENTS.

HEART., *singing.*

Hey down, hey down a down, *etc.*—

Remember, sir, your covenant to be merry.

OLD. I strive, you see, to be so; yet something pricks me within, methinks.

HEA. No further thought, I hope, of Fortune's tell-tales.

OLD. I think not of 'em. Nor will I presage [41

That, when a dispositiön of sadness
O'erclouds my spirits, I shall therefore fear
Ill news or shortly meet with some disaster.

HEA. Nay, when a man meets with bad tidings, why
May not he then compel his mind to mirth, [50
As well as puling stomachs are made strong
By eating against appetite?

OLD. Forced mirth, though, is not good.

HEA. It relishes not, you'll say; no more does meat
That is most savory to a long sick stomach,
Until by strife and custom 'tis made good.

OLD. You argue well. But do you see yond fellow? [61

HEA. I never noted him so sad before. He neither sings nor whistles.

OLD. Something troubles him. Can he force mirth out of himself now, think you?

HEA. What speak you of a clod of earth; a hind?
But one degree above a beast, compared
To the airy spirit of a gentleman? [70

OLD. He looks as he came laden with ill news,
To meet me on my way.

HEA. 'Tis very pretty. Suppose the ass be tired with sadness: will you disburden him to load yourself? Think of your covenant to be merry in spite of fortune and her riddle makers.

OLD. Why, how now, Randal! Sad? where's Springlove? [80

HEA. <He's ever in his care. But that I know
The old squire's virtue, I should think Springlove
Were sure his bastard.>

RAN. Here's his money, sir. I pray that I be charged with it no longer. The devil and I have strained courtesy these two hours about it. I would not be corrupted with the trust of more than [90 is mine own. Mr. Steward gave it me, sir, to order it for the beggars. He has made me steward of the barn and them, while he is gone, he says, a journey, to survey and measure lands abroad about the countries: some purchase, I think, for your worship.

OLD. I know his measuring of land. He is gone his old way; [99
And let him go.—Am not I merry, Hearty?

HEA. Yes; but not hearty merry. There's a whim now.

OLD. The poor's charge shall be mine. Keep you the money for him.

RAN. Mine is the greater charge then. Knew you but my temptations and my care,
You would discharge me of it.

OLD. Ha, ha, ha, ha!

RAN. I have not had it so many minutes, as I have been in several minds [111 about it; and most of them dishonest.

OLD. Go then, and give it to one of my daughters, to keep for Springlove.

RAN. O, I thank your worship! [*Exit.*

Old. Alas, poor knave! How hard a task it is to alter custom!

Hea. And how easy for money to corrupt it! What a pure treasurer would he make! [120

Old. All were not born for weighty offices; which makes me think of Springlove. He might have ta'en his leave though.

Hea. I hope he's run away with some large trust,
I never liked such demure down-looked fellows.

Old. You are deceived in him.

Hea. If you be not, [130
'Tis well. But this is from the covenant.

Old. Well, sir, I will be merry: I am resolved
To force my spirit only unto mirth.
Should I hear now my daughters were misled
Or run away, I would not send a sigh
To fetch 'em back.

Hea. T'other old song for that.

Song. [140

There was an old fellow at Waltham Cross,
Who merrily sung when he lived by the loss.
He never was heard to sigh with "hey-ho:"
But sent it out with a "Heigh trolly lo."
He cheered up his heart, when his goods went to wrack,
With a "Heghm, boy, heghm," and a cup of old sack.

Old. Is that the way on't? Well, [150 it shall be mine then.

Re-enter Randal.

Ran. My mistresses are both abroad, sir.

Old. How? since when?

Ran. On foot, sir, two hours since, with the two gentlemen
Their lovers. Here's a letter they left with
The butler; and there's a mutt'ring in the house. [161

Old. I will not read, nor open it, but conceive
Within myself the worst that can befall them—
That they are lost and no more mine. What follows?
That I am happy: all my cares are flown.
The counsel I anticipated from
My friend shall serve to set my rest upon
(Without all further helps) to jovial mirth, [172
Which I will force out of my spleen so freely
That Grief shall lose her name where I have being;
And Sadness, from my furthest foot of land,
While I have life, be banished.

Hea. What's the whim now?

Old. My tenants shall sit rent-free for this twelvemonth, [182
And all my servants have their wages doubled;
And so shall be my charge in housekeeping.
I hope my friends will find and put me to't.

Hea. For them I'll be your undertaker, sir; [190
But this is overdone: I do not like it.

Old. And, for thy news, the money that thou hast
Is now thine own: I'll make it good to Springlove.
Be sad with it, and leave me; for I tell thee,
I'll purge my house of stupid melancholy.

Ran. I'll be as merry as the charge that's under me. [*A confused noise within of laughing and singing, and one crying without.* [202
The beggars, sir. Do'e hear 'em in the barn?

Old. I'll double their allowance too, that they may
Double their numbers and increase their noise:
These bear not sound enough; and one (methought) [210
Cried out among 'em.

Ran. By a most natural cause. For there's a doxy
Has been in labor, sir; and 'tis their custom,

With songs and shouts to drown the woman's cries—
A ceremony which they use, not for
Devotion but to keep off notice of
The work they have in hand. Now [220 she is in
The straw, it seems; and they are quiet.
HEA. The straw!
That's very proper there. That's Randal's whim.
OLD. We will have such a lying-in, and such
A christening; such up-sitting and gossiping:
I mean to send forty miles circuit at [230 the least,
To draw in all the beggars can be found;
And such devices we will have for jollity,
As Fame shall boast to all posterity.
Am I not merry, Hearty? hearty merry?
HEA. Would you were else! I fear this overdoing.
OLD. I'll do't for expiation of a crime
That's charged upon my conscience till't be done. [240
HEA. <What's that? what says he?>
OLD. We will have such a festival month on't, Randal!
RAN. Sir, you may spare the labor and the cost:
They'll never thank you for't. They'll not endure
A ceremony that is not their own,
Belonging either to the child or mother.
A month, sir? They'll not be detained so long [251
For your estate. Their work is done already:
The bratling's born, the doxy's in the strummel,[3]
Laid by an autem mort[4] of their own crew
That served for mid-wife, and the childbed woman
Eating a hasty pudding for her supper,
And the child, part of it for pap, [261
I warrant you, by this time, then to sleep;
So to rise early to regain the strength
By travel, which she lost by travail.

[3] straw [4] married woman.

HEA. There's Randal again.
OLD. Can this be?
RAN. She'll have the bantling at her back to-morrow,
That was to-day in her belly, and march a foot-back with it. [271
HEA. Art there again, old Randal?
RAN. And, for their gossiping, now you are so nigh,
If you'll look in, I doubt not but you'll find 'em
At their feast already.
HEA. Pray let's see 'em, sir. [RANDAL *opens the doors of the barn. The* BEGGARS *are discovered at* [280 *their feast. After they have scrambled a while at their victuals, they sing this song:*

Here, safe in our skipper,[5] let's cly off our peck,[6]
And bouse in defiance o' th' Harman-beck[7]
Here's pannum and lap[8] and good poplars of Yarrum,[9]
To fill up the crib,[10] and to comfort the quarron.[11] [290
Now bouse a round health to the go-well and come-well
Of Cicely Bumtrincket, that lies in the strummel.
Now bouse a round health to the go-well and come-well
Of Cicely Bumtrincket, that lies in the strummel.

Here's ruffpeck[12] and casson,[13] and all of the best, [300
And scraps of the dainties of gentry coves' feast.
Here's grunter and bleater,[14] with Tib of the Butt'ry,[15]
And Margery Prater,[16] all dressed without slutt'ry.
For all this bene cribbing and peck let us then,
Bouse a health to the gentry cove of the ken.[17] [310
Now bouse a round health to the go-well and come-well
Of Cicely Bumtrincket, that lies in the strummel.

OLD. Good Heaven! how merry they are!

[5] barn. [6] meat.
[7] constable. [8] bread and porridge.
[9] buttermilk. [10] belly.
[11] stomach. [12] bacon.
[13] beef. [14] pig and mutton.
[15] goose. [16] a hen.
[17] house.

HEA. Be not you sad at that.
OLD. Sad, Hearty, no, unless it be with envy
At their full happiness. What is an estate
Of wealth and power, balanced with their freedom,
But a mere load of outward compliment?
When they enjoy the fruits of rich content,
Our dross but weighs us down into despair,
While their sublimëd spirits dance i' th' air.
HEA. I ha' not so much wealth to weigh me down,
Nor so little (I thank chance) as to dance naked.
OLD. True, my friend Hearty, thou, having less than I
(Of which I boast not), art the merrier man;
But they exceed thee in that way so far
That, should I know my children now were beggars
(Which yet I will not read), I must conclude
They were not lost, nor I to be aggrieved.
HEA. If this be madness, 'tis a merry fit.

Enter the PATRICO *from the barn. Many of the* BEGGARS *follow him.*

PAT. Toure out with your glasiers:[18] I swear by the Ruffin[19]
That we are assaulted by a queer cuffin.[20]
RAN. Hold! What d'e mean, my friends? This is our master,
The master of your feast and the feasting-house.
PAT. Is this the gentry cove?
ALL THE BEGGARS. Lord bless his worship, his good worship! Bless his worship! [*The* BEGGARS, *save the* PATRICO, *retire into the barn, and close the doors.*
PAT. Now, bounteous sir, before you go,
Hear me, the beggar Patrico,
Or Priest, if you do rather choose,
That we no word of canting use.
Long may you live, and may your store
Never decay, nor baulk the poor!
And, as you more in years do grow,
May treasure to your coffers flow!
And may your care no more thereon
Be set than ours are, that have none;
But, as your riches do increase,
So may your heart's content and peace!
And, after many, many years,
When the poor have quit their fears
Of losing you, and that with heaven
And all the world you have made even,
Then may your blest posterity,
Age after age successively,
Until the world shall be untwined
Inherit your estate and mind!
So shall the poor to the last day,
For you, in your succession, pray.
HEA. 'Tis a good vote, sir Patrico; but you are too grave. Let us hear and see something of your merry grigs that can sing, play gambols, and do feats.
PAT. Sir, I can lay my function by,
And talk as wild and wantonly
As Tom or Tib or Jack or Jill,
When they at bousing ken do swill.
Will you therefore deign to hear
My autem mort, with throat as clear,
As was Dame Aniss's of the name,
How sweet in song her notes she'll frame,
That when she chides, as loud is yawning,
As chanticleer waked by the dawning?
HEA. Yes, pray let's hear her. What is she, your wife?
PAT. Yes, sir. We of our ministery,
As well as those o' th' Presbytery,
Take wives, and defy dignity. [*Exit into the barn, and returns with his old* WIFE, *carrying a wooden bowl of drink. She is drunk.*
PAT. By Salmon,[21] I think my mort is in drink.
I find by her stink and the pretty, pretty pink
Of her neyes, that half wink,
That the tippling feast, with the doxy in the nest,
Hath turned her brain to a merry, merry vein.

[18] Keep your eyes open.
[19] devil.
[20] justice of the peace.
[21] Solomon.

MORT. Go, fiddle, Patrico, and let me sing. First set me down here on both my prats.[22]—Gently, gently, for cracking of my wind, now I must use it. Hem, hem! [*Sings.*

This is bien bouse, this is bien bouse:
Too little is my skew.[23] [421
I bouse no lage;[24] but a whole gage[25]
Of this I'll bouse to you.

This bouse is better than rum bouse,[26]
It sets the gan[27] a-giggling;
The autem mort finds better sport
In bousing than in nigling.

This is bien bouse, *etc.*

[*She tosses off her bowl, and falls back.*

PAT. So, so: your part is done.—[*Exit into the barn, carrying her.* [431

HEA. How find you, sir, yourself?

OLD. Wondrous merry, my good Hearty.

Re-enter PATRICO.

PAT. I wish we had, in all our store,
Something that could please you more.
The old or autem mort's asleep;
But, before the young ones creep
Into the straw, sir, if you are,
(As gallants sometimes love coarse fare,
So it be fresh and wholesome ware) [441
Disposed to doxy, or a dell[28]
That never yet with man did mell,
Of whom no upright man is taster,
I'll present her to you, master.

OLD. Away! You would be punished! —Oh!

HEA. How is it with you, sir?

OLD. A sudden qualm over-chills my stomach; but 'twill away. [450

Enter, from the barn, Dancers.

PAT. See, in their rags, then, dancing for your sports,
Our clapper-dudgeons[29] and their walking morts.[30] [*Dance.*
You have done well. Now let each tripper
Make a retreat into the skipper;
And couch a hogshead,[31] till the dark man's past;[32] [460
Then all with bag and baggage bing awaft.[33] [*The Dancers return into the barn.*

RAN. I told you, sir, they would be gone to-morrow.
I understand their canting.

OLD. Take that amongst you. [*Gives money.*

PAT. May rich plenty so you bless, [469
Though you still give, you ne'er have less.

HEA. And, as your walks may lead this way,
Pray strike in here another day.
So you may go, Sir Patrico.—[*Exit* PATRICO *into the barn.*
How think you, sir? or what? or why do you think at all, unless on sack and supper time? do you fall back? do you not know the danger of relapses? [479

OLD. Good Hearty, thou mistakest me, I was thinking upon this Patrico. And that he has more soul than a born beggar in him.

HEA. Rogue enough, though, to offer us his what-d'e-call'ts, his doxies! Heart and a cup of sack! do we look like old beggar-niglers?

OLD. Pray forbear that language. [488

HEA. Will you then talk of sack, that can drown sighing? will you in to supper, and take me there your guest? or must I creep into the barn among your welcome ones?

OLD. You have rebuked me timely; and most friendly. [*Exit.*

HEA. Would all were well with him. [*Exit.*

RAN. It is with me.
For now these pounds are (as I feel them swag) [500
Light at my heart, though heavy in the bag.

ACT THREE

SCENE I

The four amateur beggars having spent their first romantic night, VINCENT *and* HILLIARD *meet and discuss the comforts of it. They are both clad in beggars' rags. The scene is a highway.*

22 buttocks.
23 cup
24 water.
25 quart.
26 wine.
27 mouth.
28 virgin.
29 beggars born.
30 preferred widows.
31 lie down and sleep.
32 night is past.
33 get you hence.

Vin. Is this the life that we admired in others, with envy at their happiness?

Hil. Pray let us make virtuous use of it, and repent us of that deadly sin (before a greater punishment than famine [10 and lice fall upon us) by steering our course homeward. Before I'll endure such another night—

Vin. What? what wouldst thou do? I would thy mistress heard thee.

Hil. I hope she does not; for I know there is no altering our course before they make the first motion.

Vin. Is't possible we should be weary already, and before their softer constitutions of flesh and blood? [21

Hil. They are the stronger in will, it seems.

Enter Springlove.

Spr. How now, comrades! repining already at your fulness of liberty? Do you complain of ease?

Vin. "Ease" call'st thou it? Didst thou sleep to-night?

Spr. Not so well these eighteen months, I swear, since my last walks. [31

Hil. Lightning and tempest is out of thy litany.
Could not the thunder wake thee?

Spr. Ha, ha, ha!

Vin. Nor the noise of the crew in the quarter by us?

Hil. Nor the hogs in the hovel, that cried till they drowned the noise of the wind? If I could but once ha' dreamt, in all my former nights, that such an af- [41 fliction could have been found among beggars, sure I should never have travelled to the proof on't.

Vin. We looked upon them in their jollity, and cast no further.

Hil. Nor did that only draw us forth (by your favor, Vince), but our obedience to our loves, which we must suffer, till they cry "home" again. Are they [50 not weary yet, as much as we, dost think, Springlove?

Spr. They have more moral understanding than so. They know (and so may you) this is your birthright into a new world. And we all know (or have been told) that all come crying into the world, when the whole world of pleasure is before us. The world itself had ne'er been glorious, had it not first been a [60 confused chaos.

Vin. Well, never did knight errants in all adventures merit more of their ladies than we beggar-errants, or errant beggars, do in ours.

Spr. The greater will be your reward. Think upon that, and shew no manner of distaste, to turn their hearts from you. Y'are undone then. [69

Hil. Are they ready to appear out of their privy lodgings, in the pigs' palace of pleasure? Are they coming forth?

Spr. I left 'em almost ready, sitting on their pads of straw, helping to dress each other's heads (the one's eye is the t'other's looking-glass) with the prettiest coil they keep to fit their fancies in the most graceful way of wearing their new dressings, that you would admire. [79

Vin. I hope we are as gracefully set out; are we not?

Spr. Indifferent well. But will you fall to practise? Let me hear how you can maund when you meet with passengers.

Hil. We do not look like men, I hope, too good to learn.

Spr. Suppose some persons of worth or wealth passing by now. Note me.—Good your good worship, your charity to the poor, that will duly and truly pray for you day and night— [91

Vin. Away, you idle rogue, you should be set to work and whipped.

Spr. That is lame and sick, hungry and comfortless—

Vin. If you were well served—

Spr. And even to bless you and reward you for it—

Hil. Prethee, hold thy peace (here be doleful notes indeed!), and leave us [100 to your own genius. If we must beg, let's let it go, as it comes, by inspiration. I love not your set form of begging.

Spr. Let me instruct ye, though.

Enter Rachel *and* Meriel *also in rags.*

Ra. <Have a care, good Meriel, what hearts or limbs soever we have, and

though never so feeble, let us set our best faces on't, and laugh our last gasp out before we discover any dislike or weariness to them. Let us bear it out, till [111 they complain first, and beg to carry us home a pick-pack.

Mer. I am sorely surbated with hoofing already though, and so crupper-cramped with our hard lodging, and so bumfiddled with the straw, that—

Ra. Think not on't. I am numbed i' the bum and shoulders too a little, and have found the difference between a [120 hard floor with a little straw and a down bed with a quilt upon't. But no words, nor a sour look, I prethee.>

Hil. <O, here they come now; Madam Fewclothes and my Lady Bonnyrag.

Vin. Peace, they see us.>

Ra. and Mer. Ha, ha, ha.

Vin. We are glad the object pleases ye.

Ra. So does the subject.

Now you appear the glories of the [130 Spring,
Darlings of Phœbus, and the summer's heirs.

Hil. How fairer than fair Flora's self appear
(To deck the Spring) Diana's darlings dear!
O let us not, Actæon-like, be struck
(With greedy eyes, while we presume to look [140
On your half-nakedness, since courteous rags
Cover the rest) into the shape of stags.

Ra. and Mer. Ha, ha, ha! We are glad you are so merry.

Vin. Merry and lusty too. This night will we lie together as well as the proudest couple in the barn.

Hil. And so will we: I can hold out no longer. [150

Ra. Does the straw stir up your flesh to't, gentlemen?

Mer. Or does your provender prick you?

Spr. What! do we come for this? laugh and lie down
When your bellies are full. Remember, ladies,
You have not begged yet, to quit your destiny, [160
But have lived hitherto on my endeavors.
Who got your suppers, pray, last night, but I?
Of dainty trencher fees, from a gentleman's house:
Such as the serving-men themselves, sometimes,
Would have been glad of; and this morning now,
What comfortable chippings and sweet buttermilk [171
Had you to breakfast!

Ra. O 'twas excellent! I feel it good still, here.

Mer. There was a brown crust amongst it, that has made
My neck so white, methinks.—Is it not, Rachel?

Ra. Yes. You ga' me none on't. [179
You ever covet to have all the beauty.
'Tis the ambition of all younger sisters.

Vin. <They are pleased and never like to be weary.

Hil. No more must we, if we'll be theirs.>

Spr. Peace. Here come passengers. Forget not your rules; and quickly disperse yourselves, and fall to your calling.

[Springlove *and* Vincent *step aside. The others go out.* [190

Enter two Gentlemen.

1 Gent. Lead the horses down the hill. The heat of our speed is over, for we have lost our journey.

2 Gent. Had they taken this way, we had overtaken 'em or heard of 'em at least.

1 Gent. But some of our scouts will light on 'em, the whole country being overspread with 'em. [200

2 Gent. There was never such an escape else.

Vin. <A search for us perhaps. Yet I know not them, nor they me, I am sure. I might the better beg of 'em; but how to begin or set the worst leg forwards, would I were whipped if I know now!>

1 Gent. That a young gentlewoman of

her breeding, and heir to such an estate, should fly from so great a match, [210 and run away with her uncle's clerk!

2 GENT. The old justice will run mad upon't, I fear.

VIN. <If I were to be hanged now, I could not beg for my life.

SPR. Step forward and beg handsomely, I'll set my goad i' your breech else.

VIN. What shall I say?

SPR. Have I not told you? now begin.

VIN. After you, good Springlove.>

[*He and* VINCENT *advance.* [221

SPR. Good, your good worships—

1 GENT. Away, you idle vagabond!

SPR. Your worships' charity to a poor crytur welly starved.

VIN. That will duly and truly pray for ye.

2 GENT. You counterfeit villains, hence.

SPR. Good master's sweet worship, for the tender mercy of— [230

VIN. Duly and truly pray for you.

1 GENT. You would be well whipped and set to work, if you were duly and truly served.

VIN. <Did not I say so before?>

SPR. Good worshipful master's worship, to bestow your charity, and to maintain your health and limbs—

VIN. Duly and truly pray for you. [239

2 GENT. Begone, I say, you impudent, lusty young rascals.

1 GENT. I'll set you going else.

[*Switches them.*

SPR. Ah, the goodness of compassion to soften your hearts to the poor!

VIN. <Oh, the devil, must not we beat 'em now? 'Sdeath!

SPR. Nor shew an angry look for all the skin of our backs.> Ah, the sweetness of that mercy that gives to all, to move [250 your compassion to the hungry, when it shall seem good unto you, and night and day to bless all that you have. Ah, ah—

[*Turns to go.*

2 GENT. Come back, sirrah. <His patience and humility has wrought upon me.>

VIN. Duly and—

2 GENT. Not you, sirrah. The t'other. You look like a sturdy rogue. [260

SPR. Lord bless you master's worship.

2 GENT. There's a half-penny for you. Let him have no share with you.

VIN. <I shall never thrive o' this trade.>

1 GENT. They are of a fraternity, and will share, I warrant you.

SPR. Never in our lives truly! he never begged with me before. [269

1 GENT. But, if hedges or hen-roofs could speak, you might be found sharers in pillage, I believe.

SPR. Never saw him before, bless you, good master, in all my life. <Beg for yourself: your credit's gone else.> Good Heaven to bless and prosper ye! [*Exit.*

VINCENT *sticks close to the two* GENTLEMEN.

2 GENT. Why dost thou follow us? Is it your office to be privy to our talk? [280

VIN. Sir, I beseech you hear me. <'Slife! what shall I say?> I am a stranger in these parts, and destitute of means and apparel.

1 GENT. So methinks. And what o' that?

VIN. Will you, therefore, be pleased, as you are worthy gentlemen and blessed with plenty—

2 GENT. <This is courtly!> [290

VIN. Out of your abundant store, towards my relief in extreme necessity, to furnish me with a small parcel of money —five or six pieces, or ten, if you can presently[1] spare it.

1 AND 2 GENTS. Stand off. [*They draw their swords.*

VIN. <I have spoiled all; and know not how to beg otherwise.> [299

1 GENT. Here's a new way of begging!

VIN. <Quite run out of my instructions.>

2 GENT. Some highway thief, o' my conscience, that forgets he is weaponless.

VIN. Only to make you merry, gentlemen, at my unskilfulness in my new trade! I have been another man i' my days. So I kiss your hands. [*Exit.*

1 GENT. With your heels, do you? [309

[1] at the moment.

2 Gent. It had been good to have apprehended the rakeshame. There is some mystery in his rags; but let him go.

Enter Oliver, *putting up his sword.*

Ol., *speaking to* Hilliard, *who is off-stage.* You found your legs in time, I had made you halt for something, else.

1 Gent. Master Oliver, well returned; what's the matter, sir? [318

Ol. Why, sir, a counterfeit lame rogue begged of me; but in such language, the high sheriff's son o' the shire could not have spoke better, nor to have borrowed a greater sum. (He asked me if I could spare him ten or twenty pound.) I switched him; his cudgel was up; I drew, and into the wood he scaped me as nimbly— But first he told me I should hear from him by a gentleman, to require satisfaction of me. [329

2 Gent. We had such another begged of us. The court goes a-begging, I think.

1 Gent. Dropped through the clouds, I think; more Lucifers travelling to Hell, that beg by the way. Met you no news of your kinswoman, Mistress Amie?

Ol. No. What's the matter with her? Goes her marriage forwards with young Master Talboy? I hastened my journey from London to be at the wedding. [339

2 Gent. 'Twas to ha' been yesterday morning; all things in readiness prepared for it; but the bride, stolen by your father's clerk, is slipped away. We were in quest of 'em, and so are twenty more, several ways.

Ol. Such young wenches will have their own ways in their own loves, what matches soever their guardians make for 'em; and I hope my father will not follow the law so close to hang his clerk for [350 stealing his ward with her own consent. It may breed such a grudge, may cause some clerks to hang their masters, that have 'em o' the hip of injustice. Besides, Martin (though he be his servant), he is a gentleman. But, indeed, the miserablest rascal! He will grudge her meat, when he has her.

1 Gent. Your father is exceedingly troubled at their escape. I wish that you may qualify him with your reasons. [361

Ol. But what says Talboy to the matter, the bridegroom that should ha' been?

2 Gent. Marry, he says little to the purpose, but cries outright.

Ol. I like him well for that: he holds his humor. A miserable wretch too, though rich! I ha' known him cry when he has lost but three shillings at [370 mumchance. But, gentlemen, keep on your way to comfort my father. I know some of his man's private haunts about the country here, which I will search immediately.

1 Gent. We will accompany you, if you please.

Ol. No, by no means: that will be too public. [379

2 Gent. Do your pleasure. [*Exeunt the two* Gentlemen.

Ol. My pleasure, and all the search that I intend is, by hovering here, to take a review of a brace of the handsomest beggar-brachs that ever graced a ditch or a hedge-side. I passed by 'em in haste, but something so possesses me that I must— What the devil must I? A beggar? Why, beggars are flesh and [389 blood; and rags are no diseases, their lice are no French fleas, and there is much wholesomer flesh under country dirt than city painting, and less danger in dirt and rags than in ceruse and satin. I durst not take a touch at London, both for the present cost and fear of an after-reckoning.—But, Oliver, dost thou speak like a gentleman? fear price or pox, ha?— [400 Marry, do I, sir: nor can beggar sport be inexcusable in a young country gentleman, short of means, for another respect, a principal one, indeed, to avoid the punishment or charge of bastardy: there's no commuting with them or keeping of children for them. The poor whores, rather than part with their own, or want children at all, will steal other folks', to travel with and move compassion. He feeds a beggar wench well that fills her belly with young bones. And, these [410

reasons considered, good master Oliver—'Slid, yonder they are at peep, and now sitten down as waiting for my purpose.

Enter VINCENT.

<Heart! Here's another delay. I must shift him.> Dost hear, honest poor fellow? I prethee go back presently: and at the hill foot (here's sixpence for thy pains) thou shalt find a footman with a horse in his hand. Bid him wait there! his master will come presently, say. [421

VIN. Sir, I have a business of another nature to you, which (as I presume you are a gentleman of right noble spirit and resolution) you will receive without offence, and in that temper as most properly appertains to the most heroic natures.

OL. Thy language makes me wonder at thy person. What's the matter with thee? quickly. [430

VIN. You may be pleased to call to mind a late affront which, in your heat of passion, you gave a gentleman.

OL. What, such a one as thou art, was he?

VIN. True, noble sir; who could no less in honor than direct me, his chosen friend, unto you, with the length of his sword, or to take the length of yours; the place, if you please, the ground [440 whereon you parted; the hour, seven the next morning; or, if you like not these, in part, or all, to make your own appointments.

OL. <The bravest method in beggars that ever was discovered! I would be upon the bones of this rogue now, but for crossing my other design, which fires me. I must therefore be rid of him on any terms.> Let his own appointments stand. Tell him I'll meet him. [451

VIN. You shall most nobly engage his life to serve you, sir.

OL. You'll be his second, will you?

VIN. To do you further service, sir, I have undertaken it.

OL. I'll send a beadle shall undertake you both.

VIN. Your mirth becomes the bravery of your mind and dauntless spirit. So [460 takes his leave your servant, sir. [*Exit.*

OL. I think, as my friend said, the court goes a-begging indeed. But I must not lose my beggar wenches. Oh, here they come! They are delicately skinned and limbed. There, there, I saw above the ham as the wind blew. Now they spy me.

Enter RACHEL *and* MERIEL.

RA. Sir, I beseech you look upon us with the favor of a gentleman. We are [470 in a present distress and utterly unacquainted in these parts: and therefore forced by the calamity of our misfortune to implore the courtesy, or rather charity, of those to whom we are strangers.

OL. <Very fine, this!>

MER. Be therefore pleased, right noble sir, not only valuing us by our outward habits, which cannot but appear loathsome or despicable unto you, but as [480 we are forlorn Christians; and, in that estimation, be compassionately moved to cast a handful or two of your silver, or a few of your golden pieces, unto us, to furnish us with linen, and some decent habiliments.

OL. <They beg as high as the man beggar I met withal! sure the beggars are all mad to-day, or bewitched into a language they understand not. The [490 spirits of some decayed gentry talk in 'em sure.>

RA. May we expect a gracious answer from you, sir?

MER. And that as you can wish our virgin prayers to be propitious for you.

RA. That you never be denied a suit by any mistress.

MER. Nay, that the fairest may be ambitious to place their favors on you. [500

RA. That your virtue and valor may lead you to the most honorable actions; and that the love of all exquisite ladies may arm you.

MER. And that, when you please to take a wife, may honor, beauty, and wealth contend to endow her most with.

RA. And that with her you have a long and prosperous life. [509

MER. A fair and fortunate posterity.

Ol. <This exceeds all that ever I heard, and strikes me into wonder.> Pray tell me, how long have you been beggars, or how chanced you to be so?

Ra. By influence of our stars, sir.

Mer. We were born to no better fortune.

Ol. How came you to talk thus, and so much above the beggars' dialect? [519

Ra. Our speech came naturally to us, and we ever loved to learn by rote as well as we could.

Mer. And to be ambitious above the vulgar, to ask more than common alms, whate'er men please to give us.

Ol. <Sure some well disposed gentleman, as myself, got these wenches. They are too well grown to be mine own, and I cannot be incestuous with 'em.>

Ra. Pray, sir, your noble bounty. [530

Ol. <What a tempting lip that little rogue moves there! and what an enticing eye the other. I know not which to begin with.> What's this? a flea upon thy bosom?

Mer. Is it not a straw-colored one, sir?

Ol. <O, what a provoking skin is there! that very touch inflames me.>

Ra. Sir, are you moved in charity towards us yet? [541

Ol. Moved? I am moved: no flesh and blood more moved.

Mer. Then pray, sir, your benevolence.

Ol. <Benevolence? which shall I be benevolent to; or which first? I am puzzled in the choice. Would some sworn brother of mine were here to draw a cut with me.>

Ra. Sir, noble sir. [550

Ol. First let me tell you, damsels, I am bound by a strong vow to kiss all of the woman sex I meet this morning.

Mer. Beggars and all, sir?

Ol. All, all. Let not your coyness cross a gentleman's vow, I beseech you.—

[*Kisses them.*

Ra. You will tell now.

Ol. Tell, quotha! I could tell a thousand on those lips—and as many [560 upon those. <What life-restoring breaths they have! Milk from the cow streams not so sweetly. I must lay one of 'em aboard; both, if my tackling hold.>

Ra. and Mer. Sir, sir!

Ol. <But how to bargain, now, will be the doubt: they, that beg so high as by the handfuls, may expect for price above the rate of good men's wives.>

Ra. Now, will you, sir, be pleased? [570

Ol. With all my heart, sweetheart. And I am glad thou knowest my mind. Here is twelvepence a-piece for you.

Ra. and Mer. We thank you, sir.

Ol. That's but in earnest. I'll jest away the rest with ye. Look here. [*Shows money.*] All this. Come, you know my meaning. Dost thou look about thee, sweet little one? I like thy care. There's nobody coming, but we'll get [580 behind these bushes. I know you keep each other's counsels. Must you be drawn to't? Then I'll pull. [*Tries to drag* Rachel *away.*] Come away—

Ra. and Mer., *screaming for help.* Ah, ah!

Enter Springlove, Vincent, *and* Hilliard.

Vin. Let's beat his brains out.

Ol. Come, leave your squealing. [590

Ra. O, you hurt my hand.

Hil. Or cut the lecher's throat.

Spr. Would you be hanged? Stand back. Let me alone.

Mer. You shall not pull us so.

Spr. O, do not hurt 'em, master.

Ol. Hurt 'em? I meant 'em but too well. Shall I be so prevented?

Spr. They be but young and simple; and, if they have offended, let not [600 your worship's own hands drag 'em to the law or carry 'em to punishment. Correct 'em not yourself. It is the beadle's office.

Ol. Do you talk, Shake-rag? <Heart! yond's more of 'em. I shall be beggar-mawled if I stay.> Thou say'st right, honest fellow, there's a tester for thee.

[*Gives* Springlove *money, and runs off.*

Vin. He is prevented, and ashamed of his purpose. [610

Spr. Nor were we to take notice of his purpose more than to prevent it.

Hil. True, politic Springlove, 'twas better his own fear quit us of him than our force.

Ra. Look you here, gentlemen, twelvepence a-piece.

Mer. Besides fair offers and large promises. What ha' you got to-day, gentlemen? [620

Vin. More than (as we are gentlemen) we would have taken.

Hil. Yet we put it up in your service.

Mer. and Ra. Ha, ha, ha! Switches and kicks. Ha, ha, ha!

Spr. Talk not here of your gettings. We must quit this quarter. The eager gentleman's repulse may arm and return him with revenge upon us. We must therefore leap hedge and ditch now; [630 through the briars and mires, till we scape out of this liberty to our next rendezvous, where we shall meet the crew, and then, hay toss and laugh all night.

Mer. As we did last night?

Ra. <Hold out, Meriel.>

Mer. Lead on, brave general.

Vin. <What shall we do? They are in heart still. Shall we go on? [639

Hil. There's no flinching back, you see.

Spr. Besides, if you beg no better than you begin, in this lofty fashion, you cannot scape the jail or whip long.

Vin. To tell you true, 'tis not the least of my purpose to work means for our discovery, to be released out of our trade.>

Spr. Stay, here come more passengers. Single yourselves again, and fall to your calling discreetly. [650

Hil. I'll single no more: if you'll beg in full cry, I am for you.

Mer. Ay, that will be fine; let's charm all together.

Spr. Stay first and list a little.

Enter Martin *and* Amie *in poor habits.*

Mar. Be of good cheer, sweetheart; we have scaped hitherto; and I believe that all the search is now retired, and we may safely pass forwards. [660

Am. I should be safe with thee; but that's a most lying proverb that says, "Where Love is, there's no lack." I am faint, and cannot travel further without meat; and, if you loved me, you would get me some.

Mer. We'll venture at the next village to call for some. The best is, we want no money. [669

Am. We shall be taken then, I fear: I'll rather pine to death.

Mar. Be not so fearful. Who can know us in these clownish habits?

Am. Our clothes, indeed, are poor enough to beg with. Would I could beg, so it were of strangers that could not know me, rather than buy of those that would betray us.

Mar. And yonder be some that can teach us. [680

Spr. <These are the young couple of runaway lovers disguised that the country is so laid for. Observe and follow now.> Now the Lord to come with ye, good loving master and mistress, your blessed charity to the poor, lame and sick, weak and comfortless, that will night and day—

All. Duly and truly pray for you, duly and truly pray for you. [690

Spr. Pray hold your peace and let me alone.—Good young master and mistress, a little comfort amongst us all, and to bless you where'er you go, and—

All. Duly and truly pray for you. Duly and truly—

Spr. Pray do not use me thus.—Now, sweet young master and mistress, to look upon your poor, that have no relief or succor, no bread to put in our heads. [700

Vin. <Wouldst thou put bread in thy brains?>—No lands or livings.

[The following five speeches are spoken together.]

Spr. No house nor home; nor covering from the cold; no health, no help but your sweet charity.

Mer. No bands or shirts but lousy on our backs.

Hil. No smocks or petticoats to hide our scratches. [711

Ra. No shoes to our legs, or hose to our feet.

Vin. No skin to our flesh, nor flesh to our bones shortly.

Hil. If we follow the devil that taught us to beg—

All. Duly and truly pray for you.

Spr. I'll run away from you, if you beg a stroke more.—Good worshipful master and mistress— [721

Mar. Good friend, forbear. Here is no master or mistress. We are poor folks. Thou seest no worship upon our backs, I am sure. And, for within, we want as much as you and would as willingly beg, if we knew how as well.

Spr. Alack for pity. You may have enough; and what I have is yours, if you'll accept it. 'Tis wholesome food [730 from a good gentleman's gate. [*Gives* Amie *food.*]—Alas, good mistress! Much good do your heart! <How savorly she feeds!>

Mar. What do you mean; to poison yourself?

Am. Do you shew love in grudging me?

Mar. Nay, if you think it hurts you not, fall to. I'll not beguile you. And here, mine host, something towards your reckoning. [*Offers money.* [741

Am. This beggar is an angel sure!

Spr. Nothing by way of bargain, gentle master. 'Tis against order, and will never thrive. But pray, sir, your reward in charity.

Mar. Here then in charity. <This fellow would never make a clerk.>

Spr. What! all this, master?

Am. What is it? Let me see't. [750

Spr. 'Tis a whole silver three-pence, mistress.

Am. For shame, ingrateful miser. Here, friend, a golden crown for thee.

Spr. Bountiful goodness! Gold? If I thought a dear year were coming, I would take a farm now.

Am. I have robbed thy partners of their shares too. There's a crown more for them. [760

The Four Lovers. Duly and truly pray for you.

Mar. <What have you done? less would have served; and your bounty will betray us.

Am. Fie on your wretched policy!>

Spr. No, no, good master. I knew you all this while, and my sweet mistress too. And now I'll tell you: the search is every way; the country all laid for you. 'Tis [770 well you stayed here. Your habits, were they but a little nearer our fashion, would secure you with us. But are you married, master and mistress? Are you joined in matrimony? In heart, I know you are. And I will (if it please you), for your great bounty, bring you to a curate that lacks no license nor has any living to lose, that shall put you together. [780

Mar. Thou art a heavenly beggar!

Spr. But he is so scrupulous and severely precise that unless you, mistress, will affirm that you are with child by the gentleman, or that you have, at least, cleft or slept together (as he calls it), he will not marry you; but, if you have lain together, then 'tis a case of necessity, and he holds himself bound to do it.

Mar. You may say you have. [790

Am. I would not have it so, nor make that lie against myself for all the world.

Spr. <That I like well, and her exceedingly.> I'll do my best for you, however.

Mar. I'll do for thee, that thou shalt never beg more.

Spr. That cannot be purchased, scarce for the price of your mistress. Will you walk, master? We use no compliments.

Am. By inforced matches wards are [801
not set free
So oft as sold into captivity;
Which made me, fearless, fly from one I
hate,
Into the hazard of a harder Fate.

ACT FOUR

Scene I

Talboy *and* Oliver *have just dismounted in front of* Master Oldrents' *house. Both carry riding switches.* Talboy *is in a weeping mood for the loss of*

AMIE *and for the blow her flight has been to his vanity.* OLIVER *has not very much patience with him.*

TAL.

She's gone.
Amie is gone. [10
Ay me, she's gone,
And has me left
Of joy bereft,
To make my moan.
O me, Amie!

OL. <What the devil ails the fellow, trow?> Why! why, master Talboy, [bridegroom] that shouldst ha' been, art not ashamed to cry at this growth? and for a thing that's better lost than found; a wench? [21

TAL. Cry! who cries? do I cry, or look with a crying countenance? I scorn it; and scorn to think on her, but in just anger.

OL. So, this is brave now, if 'twould hold.

TAL. Nay, it shall hold. And so let her go, for a scurvy what d'e call't; I know not what bad enough to call her.—But something of mine goes with her, I am sure. [31 She has cost me in gloves, ribands, scarfs, rings, and suchlike things, more than I am able to speak of at this time.—Oh!

OL. Because thou canst not speak for crying. Fie, master Talboy! again?

TAL. I scorn it again, and any man that says I cry, or will cry again! And let her go again; and what she has of mine let her keep, and hang herself, and the [40 rogue that's with her! I have enough, and am heir of a well-known estate; and that she knows; and therefore that she should slight me, and run away with a wages-fellow that is but a petty clerk and a serving-man! There's the vexation of it!—Oh, there's the grief, and the vexation of it! Oh! [48

OL. <Now he will cry his eyes out.> You, sir: this life have I had with you all our long journey; which now is at an end here. This is master Oldrents' house, where perhaps we shall find old Hearty, the uncle of the rogue Martin, that is run away with your sweetheart.

TAL. Ay, 'tis true, too true, too true. You need not put me in mind on't. Oh, Oh! [58

OL. Hold your peace, and mind me. Leave your bawling, for fear I give you correction. This is the house, I say, where it is most likely we shall hear of your mistress and her companion. Make up your face quickly. Here comes one of the servants, I suppose.

Enter RANDAL.

Shame not yourself forever, and me for company. Come, be confident.

TAL. As confident as yourself or any man; but my poor heart feels what [70 lies here; here! Ay, here it is!—O!

OL. Good morrow, friend! This is squire Oldrents' house, I take it.

RAN. Pray, take it not, sir, before it be to be let. It has been my master's, and his ancestors' in that name, above these three hundred years, as our house chronicle doth notify; and not yet to be let; but, as a friend, or stranger, in [79 guest-wise, you are welcome to it; as all other gentlemen are, far and near, to my good master, as you will find anon when you see him.

OL. Thou speak'st wittily and honestly. But I prethee, good friend, let our nags be set up: they are tied up at the post. You belong to the stable, do you not?

RAN. Not so much as the stable belongs to me, sir. I pass through many offices of the house, sir: I am the running baily of it. [91

OL. We have rid hard, hoping to find the squire at home at this early time in the morning.

RAN. You are deceived in that, sir. He has been out these four hours. He is no snail, sir. You do not know him, I perceive, since he has been new moulded. But I'll tell you, because you are gentlemen. [100

OL. Our horses, good friend.

RAN. My master is an ancient gentleman, and a great house-keeper, and prayed for by all the poor in the country. He keeps a guest house for all beggars

far and near, costs him a hundred a year, at least; and is as well beloved among the rich. But, of late, he fell into a great melancholy, upon what I know not; for he had then more cause to be merry than he has now. Take that by the way. [111

Ol. But, good friend, our horses.

Ran. For he had two daughters, that knew well to order a house, and give entertainment to gentlemen. They were his house doves. But now they are flown; and no man knows how, why, or whither.

Tal. My dove is flown too. Oh! [119

Ran. Was she your daughter, sir? She was a young one then, by the beard you wear.

Tal. What she was, she was, d'ee see. I scorn to think on her; but I do. Oh!

Ol. Pray hold your peace, or feign some mirth, if you can.

Tal. Let her go, let her go. [*Tries to sing.*

I care not if I have her, I have her or no.—

Ha, ha, ha! Oh, my heart will break! Oh! [131

Ol. Pray think of our horses, sir.

Ran. This is right my master: when he had his daughters, he was sad; and, now they are gone, he is the merriest man alive. Up at five a'clock in the morning, and out till dinner time. Out again at afternoon, and so till supper time; skise out this-away, and skise out that-away. (He's no snail I assure you.) And tan- [140 tivy all the country over, where hunting, hawking, or any sport is to be made, or good fellowship to be had; and so merry upon all occasions that you would even bless yourself, if it were possible.

Ol. Our horses, I prethee.

Ran. And we, his servants, live as merrily under him, and do all thrive. I myself was but a silly lad when I came first, a poor turnspit boy. Gentlemen kept no [150 whirling jacks then, to cozen poor people of meat; and I have now, without boast, forty pounds in my purse, and am the youngest of half a score in the house, none younger than myself but one; and he is the steward over all: his name is Master Springlove (bless him where'er he is); he has a world of means; and we, the underlings, get well the better by him; besides the rewards many gen- [160 tlemen give us, that fare well and lodge here sometimes.

Ol. O! we shall not forget you, friend, if you remember our horses, before they take harm.

Ran. No hurt, I warrant you: there's a lad walking them.

Ol. Is not your master coming, think you? [169

Ran. He will not be long a-coming. He's no snail, as I told you.

Ol. You told me so, indeed.

Ran. But, of all the gentlemen that toss up the ball, yea, and the sack, too, commend me to old Master Hearty, a decayed gentleman, lives most upon his own mirth and my master's means (and much good do him with it!), he is the finest companion of all: he does so hold my master up with stories and songs and [180 catches and t'other cup of sack, and such tricks and jigs, you would admire: he is with him now.

Ol. <That Hearty is Martin's uncle. I am glad he is here.> Bear up, Talboy. Now, friend, pray let me ask you a question. [Randal *turns away.*] Prethee stay.

Ran. Nay, marry, I dare not. Your yawdes may take cold, and never be good after it. [*Exit.* [191

Ol. I thought I should never have been rid of him; but no sooner desired to stay, but he is gone. A pretty humor!

Re-enter Randal.

Ran. Gentlemen, my master will be here e'en now, doubt not; for he is no snail, as I told you. [*Exit.*

Ol. "No snail"'s a great word with him.—Prethee Talboy, bear up. [200

Enter Usher.

Here comes another gray fellow.

Ush. Do you stand in the porch, gentlemen? the house is open to you. Pray enter the hall. I am the usher of it.

Ol. In good time, sir. We shall be bold here, then, to attend your master's coming.

Ush. And he's upon coming; and, when he comes, he comes apace. He's no snail, I assure you.

Ol. I was told so before, sir. <"No snail!" Sure 'tis the word of the house, and as ancient as the family.>

Ush. This gentleman looks sadly, methinks.

Tal. Who, I? not I. Pray pardon my looks for that! But my heart feels what's what. Ay me!

Ush. Pray walk to the butt'ry, gentlemen. My office leads you thither.

Ol. Thanks, good master usher.

Ush. I have been usher these twenty years, sir. And have got well by my place, for using strangers respectfully.

Ol. <He has given the hint, too.>

Ush. Something has come in by-the-by, besides standing wages, which is ever duly paid, thank a good master and an honest steward, Heaven bless 'em! We all thrive under 'em.

Enter Butler *with glasses and a napkin.*

O, here comes the butler.

But. You are welcome, gentlemen. Please ye draw nearer my office, and take a morning draught in a cup of sack, if it please you.

Ol. In what please you, sir. We cannot deny the courtesy of the house, in the master's absence.

But. He'll come apace when he comes. He's no snail, sir.

Ol. <Still 'tis the house word; and all the servants wear livery beards.>

But. Or perhaps you had rather drink white wine and sugar. Please yourselves, gentlemen; here you may taste all liquors. No gentleman's house in all this county or the next so well stored (make us thankful for it); and my master, for his hospitality to gentlemen, his charity to the poor, and his bounty to his servants, has not his peer in the kingdom (make us thankful for it); and 'tis as fortunate a house for servants as ever was built upon fairy ground. I, myself, that have served here, man and boy, these four and forty years, have gotten together (besides something more than I will speak of, distributed among my poor kindred) by my wages, my vails at Christmas, and otherwise, together with my rewards of kind gentlemen that have found courteous entertainment here—

Ol. <There he is too!>

But. Have, I say, gotten together (though in a dangerous time I speak it) a brace of hundred pounds (make me thankful for it); and, for losses, I have had none. I have been butler these two and thirty years, and never lost the value of a silver spoon, nor ever broke a glass (make me thankful for it). White wine and sugar say you, sir?

Ol. Please yourself, sir.

But. This gentleman speaks not. Or had you rather take a drink of brown ale with a toast, or march beer with sugar and nutmeg? or had you rather drink without sugar?

Ol. Good sir, a cup of your household beer. [*Exit* Butler.] I fear he will draw down to that at last.

Re-enter Butler *with a silver can of sack.*

But. Here, gentlemen, is a cup of my master's small beer; but it is good old canary, I assure you. And here's to your welcome.

Enter Cook.

Cook. And "welcome" the cook says, gentlemen.—Brother Butler, lay a napkin, I'll fetch a cut of the sirloin to strengthen your patience till my master comes, who will not now be long, for he's no snail, gentlemen.

Ol. I have often heard so. And here's to you, master cook.—Prethee speak, Master Talboy, or force one laugh more, if thou canst.

Cook. Sir, the cook drinks to you.

Tal. Ha, ha, ha!

Ol. Well said!

Tal. He is in the same livery beard too.

Cook. But he is the oldest cook, and

of the ancientest house, and the best for housekeeping, in this county, or the next. And, though the master of it write but squire, I know no lord like him.

Enter CHAPLAIN. [310

And now he's come. Here comes the word before him. The parson has ever the best stomach. I'll dish away presently. [*Exit.*

BUT. Is our master come, sir Dominie?

CHAP. *Est ad manum. Non est ille testudo.*

OL. <He has the word too in Latin.> Now bear up, Talboy. [319

CHAP. Give me a preparative of sack. It is a gentle offer, sir, and as gently to be taken.

Enter OLDRENTS *and* HEARTY.

OLD. About with it, my lads!—And this is as it should be. Not till my turn, sir, I; though I confess, I have had but three morning draughts to-day.

OL. Yet it appears you were abroad betimes, sir.

OLD. I am no snail, sir. [330

OL. So your men told us, sir.

OLD. But where be my catchers? Come, a round; and so let us drink!

[*The catch is sung; and they drink about. The singers are all graybeards.*

A round, a round, a round, boys, a round.
Let mirth fly aloft, and sorrow be drowned.
Old sack and old songs, and a merry old crew, [340
Can charm away cares when the ground looks blue.

OLD. Well said, old Hearty.—And, gentlemen, welcome!

TAL., *sighing.* Ah!

OLD. Oh, mine ears! What was that, a sigh? And in my house? Look: has it not split my walls? If not, make vent for it: let it out: I shall be stifled else. [*Exit* CHAPLAIN. [350

OL. He hopes your pardon, sir, his cause considered.

OLD. Cause? Can there be cause for sighing?

OL. He has lost his mistress, sir.

OLD. Ha, ha, ha! Is that a cause? Do you hear me complain of the loss of my two daughters?

OL. They are not lost, I hope, sir. [359

OLD. No more can be his mistress. No woman can be lost: they may be mislaid a little, but found again, I warrant you.

TAL., *sighing.* Ah!

OLD. 'Ods my life! He sighs again, and means to blow me out of my house. To horse again! Here's no dwelling for me! —Or stay: I'll cure him if I can. Give him more sack, to drown his suspirations. [*While* OLDRENTS *and* TALBOY *drink,* OLIVER *takes* HEARTY *aside.* [370

OL. <Sir, I am chiefly to inform you of the disaster.

HEA. May it concern me?

OL. Your nephew Martin has stolen my father's ward, that gentleman's bride that should have been.

HEA. Indeed, sir!

OL. 'Tis most true.> [*He gives* HEARTY *a letter.* [379

HEA. Another glass of sack: this gentleman brings good news.

OL. Sir, if you can prevent his danger—

HEA. Hang all preventions! let 'em have their destiny.

TAL., *to* OLDRENTS. Sir, I should have had her, 'tis true; but she is gone, d'ee see? And let her go!

OLD. Well said!—He mends now.

TAL. I am glad I am rid of her (d'ee see) before I had more to do with her. [390

HEA. He mends apace. [HEARTY *reads the letter.*

TAL. For, should I have married her before she had run away (d'ee see), and that she had run away (d'ee see) after she had been married to me (d'ee see), then I had been a married man without a wife (d'ee see), where now, she being run away before I am married (d'ee see), I am no more married to her (d'ee see) [400 than she to me (d'ee see); and, so long as I am none of hers (d'ee see), nor she none of mine (d'ee see), I ought to care as little for her, now she is run away

(d'ee see), as if she had stayed with me (d'ee see).

Old. Why, this is excellent!—Come hither, Hearty. [408

Tal. I perceive it now, and the reason of it; and how, by consequence (d'ee see) I ought not to look any further after her. [*Cries.*] But that she should respect a poor base fellow, a clerk at the most, and a servingman at best, before me, that am a rich man, at the worst, and a gentleman, at least, makes me—I know not what to say—

Old. Worse than ever 'twas! Now he cries outright.

Tal. I know not what to say—what to say—Oh! [421

Hea. Then I do, sir. The poor base fellow that you speak of is my nephew: as good a gentleman as yourself. I understand the business by your friend here.

Tal. I cry you mercy, sir.

Old. You shall cry no mercy, nor anything here, sir. This is no place to cry in: nor for any business.—[*To* Oliver.] You, sir, that come on business— [430

Ol. It shall be none, sir.

Old. My house is for no business but the belly-business. You find not me so uncivil, sir, as to ask you from whence you came, who you are, or what's your business. I ask no questions; and can you be so discourteous as to tell me or my friend anything like business? If you come to be merry with me, you are welcome; if you have any business, [440 forget it: you forget where you are else. And so to dinner!

Hea. Sir, I pray, let me only prevail with you but to read this.

Old. Spoil my stomach now, and I'll not eat this fortnight. [*He reads aside.*

Hea., *to* Oliver. While he reads, let me tell you, sir: that my nephew Martin has stolen that gentleman's mistress, it [449 seems, is true; but I protest, as I am a gentleman, I know nothing of the matter, nor where he or she is; but, as I am the foresaid gentleman, I am glad on't with all my heart.—Ha, my boy, Mat! thou shalt restore our house.

Ol. Let him not hear, to grieve him, sir.

Hea. Grieve him? What should he do with her; teach their children to cry?

Tal. But I do hear you though; and [460 I scorn to cry, as much as you, d'ee see, or your nephew either, d'ee see.

Hea. Now thou art a brave fellow. So, so! hold up thy head, and thou shalt have a wife and a fine thing.

Tal. Hang a wife! and pox o' your fine thing (d'ee see)! I scorn your fopperies, d'ee see.

Old. And I do hear thee, my boy; and rejoice i' thy conversion. If thou canst but hold now! [471

Tal. Yes, I can hold, sir. And I hold well with your sack. I could live and die with it, as I am true Talboy.

Old. Now thou art a tall fellow; and shalt want no sack.

Tal. And, sir, I do honor you (d'ee see), and should wish myself one of your household servants (d'ee see) if I had but a gray beard (d'ee see). "Hay!" as old master Clack says. [481

Old. Well, I have read the business here.

Ol. Call it not business, I beseech you, sir. We defy all business.

Tal. Ay, marry do we, sir. D'ee see, sir? And a "Hay," as old master Clack says!

Old. Gramercy sack! Well, I have read the matter here written by Master Clack. And, do but bear up in thy [491 humor, I will wait upon thee home.

[*Knock within.*

Hark! they knock to the dresser. I have heard much of this odd-ceited Justice Clack; and now I long to see him. 'Tis but crossing the country two days and a night's journey. We'll but dine, and away presently. Bear up, I say, Master Talboy. [500

Tal. I will bear up, I warrant you, d'ee see, sir; but here's a grudging still.

Scene II

Amie, Rachel, *and* Meriel *are in an open field outside a barn. From within*

comes a great noise of rude music, singing, laughing, etc.

Am. Here's a wedding with a witness, and a holiday with a hoigh! Let us out of the noise, as we love our ears.

Ra. Yes: and here we may pursue our own discourse, and hear one another. [9

Mer. Concerning Springlove and yourself, Mistress Amie.

Am. Well, ladies, my confidence in you, that you are the same that you have protested yourselves to be, hath so far won upon me that I confess myself well affected both to the mind and person of that Springlove. And, if he be (as fairly you pretend) a gentleman, I shall easily dispense with fortune. [19

Ra. and Mer. He is, upon our honors.

Am. How well that high engagement suits your habits!

Ra. Our minds and blood are still the same.

Am. I have passed no affiance to the other that stole me from my guardian and the match he would have forced me to, from which I would have fled with any, or without a guide. Besides, his mind, more clownish than his habit, [30 depraved by covetousness and cowardice, forced me into a way of misery, to take relief from beggars.

Mer. From poor us!

Am. And, then, to offer to marry me under a hedge, as the old couple were to-day, without book or ring, by the chaplain of the beggars' regiment, your Patrico, only to save charges. [39

Ra. I have not seen the wretch these three hours. Whither is he gone?

Am. He told me, to fetch horse and fit raiment for us; and so to post me hence, but I think it was to leave me on your hands.

Mer. He has taken some great distaste sure: for he is damnable jealous.

Ra. Ay, didst thou mark what a wild look he cast, when Springlove tumbled [49 her and kissed her on the straw this morning, while the music played to the old wedding-folks?

Mer. Yes; and then Springlove, to make him madder, told him that he would be his proxy, and marry her for him, and lie with her the first night, with a naked cudgel betwixt 'em, and make him a king of beggars.

Am. I saw how it angered him; and I imagined then, and before, that there [60 was more in Springlove than downright beggar; but, though he be never so good a gentleman, he shall observe fit time and distance till we are married.

Ra. Matrimony forbid else! <She's taken.> But, while we talk of a match towards, we are missed within in the bride-barn among the revel rout. [68

Am. We have had all the sport they could make us in the past passages.

Mer. How cautious the old contracted couple were for portion and jointure!

Ra. What feoffees she, being an heir of four score (and seven years stone blind), had in trust for her estate.

Am. And how carefully he secured all to himself, in case he outlived her, being but seven years older than she! And what pains the lawyer of the rout here took about it! [80

Ra. And, then, how solemnly they were joined, and admonished by our Parson Underhedge to love together in the fear of the lash and give good example to the younger reprobates, to beg within compass, to escape the jaws of the justice, the clutch of the constable, the hooks of the headborough, and the biting blows of the beadle; and, in so doing, they should defy the devil and all his works, and, [90 after their painful pilgrimage in this life, they should die in the ditch of delight.

Mer. O but Poet Scribble's epithalamium!

"To the blind virgin of fourscore,
And the lame bachelor of more,
How Cupid gave her eyes to see,
And Vulcan lent him legs:
How Venus caused their sport to be
Prepared with buttered eggs! [100
Yet, when she shall be seven years wed,
She shall be bold to say,
She has as much her maidenhead,
As on her wedding day.

Ra. So may some wives that were

married at sixteen to lads of one and twenty.

Am. But, at the wedding feast, when the bride bridled it and her groom [109 saddled it, there was the sport, in her mumping and his champing, the crew scrambling, ourselves trembling; then the confusion of noises, in talking, laughing, scolding, singing, howling; with their actions of snatching, scratching, tossing, and lousing themselves and one another—

Enter Springlove, Vincent, *and* Hilliard.

But who comes here? [119

Spr. O, ladies, you have lost as much mirth as would have filled up a week of holidays. [Springlove *takes* Amie *aside, and courts her in a genteel way.*

Vin. I am come about again for the beggar's life now.

Ra. You are? I am glad on't.

Hil. There is no life but it.

Vin. With them there is no grievance or perplexity;
No fear of war, or state disturbances. [130
No alteration in a commonwealth,
Or innovation shakes a thought of theirs.

Mer. Of ours, you should say.

Hil. Of ours, he means:
We have no fear of lessening our estates,
Nor any grudge with us (without taxation)
To lend or give, upon command, the whole
Strength of our wealth for public benefit; [141
While some, that are held rich in their abundance,
(Which is their misery, indeed) will see
Rather a general ruin upon all,
Than give a scruple to prevent the fall.

Vin. 'Tis only we that live.

Ra. I'm glad you are so taken with your calling.

Mer. We are no less, I assure you: we find the sweetness of it now. [151

Ra. The mirth, the pleasure, the delights: no ladies live such lives.

Mer. Some few, upon necessity, perhaps; but that's not worth gramercy.

Vin. <They will never be weary.

Hil. Whether we seem to like or dislike, all's one to them.

Vin. We must do something to be [159 taken by and discovered; we shall never be ourselves, and get home again else.>

[Springlove *and* Amie *rejoin the rest.*

Spr. <I am yours forever.> Well, ladies, you have missed rare sport; but now the bride has missed you with her half-half eye; and the bridegroom, with the help of his crutches, is drawing her forth for a dance, here, in the opener air. The house is now too hot for 'em. O, here come the chief revellers!—the [170 soldier, the courtier, the lawyer, and the poet, who is master of their revels, before the old couple in state. Attend, and hear him speak, as their inductor.

Enter the Revellers and the newly married couple.

Poet.

Here, on this green, like king and queen,
For a short truce, we do produce
Our old new-married pair. [180
Of dish and wallet, and of straw-pallet,
With rags to show from top to toe,
She is the ancient heir.
He is the Lord of Bottle-gourd,
Of satchel great, for bread and meat,
And, for small pence, a purse.
To all that give "long may you live"
He loudly cries; but who denies
Is sure to have his curse.

Vin. Well said, field poet. Phœbus, [190 we see, inspires
As well the beggar as the poet laureate.

Spr. And shines as warm under a hedge-bottom as on the tops of palaces.

Po. I have not done yet. Now this to incite you to dance:

Prepare yourselves, like fairy elves,
Now, in a dance, to show,
That you approve, the god of love
Has many shafts to's bow [200

With golden head, and some of lead;
But that which made these feel
By subtle craft, was, sure, a shaft
That headed was with steel;

For they were old; no earth more cold;
Their hearts were flints entire;
Whence the steel's stroke did sparks provoke

That set their bloods on fire.— [209

Now strike up, Piper; and each lover here
Be blythe, and take his mistress by the goll.

Hil. That's no rhyme, Poet.

Poet. There's as good poetry in blank verse as metre. [*Music.*

Spr. Come, ha! the dance, the dance! Nay, we'll ha' the old couple in, as blind and lame as they are. [219

Bride. What, will you so? [*The old couple dance, with the others.*

Spr. Well hobbled, bridegroom!

Vin. Well groped, bride!

Hil. Hay, lusty! Hay, holiday!

Spr. Set 'em down; set 'em down: they ha' done well.

Groom. Ah ha! I am lustier than I was thirty years ago.

Bride. And I, than I was threescore past. [*Coughing.*] Ahem, ahem! [230

Vin. What a night here's towards!

Hil. Sure, they will kill one another.

Poet. Each with a fear the t'other will live longest.

Spr. Poet, thou hast spoken learnedly and acted bravely. Thou art both poet and actor.

Poet. So has been many famous men; and, if here were no worse, we might have a masque or a comedy presented to-night, in honor of the old couple. [241

Vin. Let us each man try his ability
Upon some subject now extempore.

Spr. Agreed. Give us a theme; and try our action.

Poet. I have already thought upon't. I want but actors.

Hil. What persons want you? what would you present?

Poet. I would present a commonwealth: Utopia, [251
With all her branches and consistencies.

Ra. I'll be Utopia; who must be my branches?

Poet. The Country, the City, the Court, and the Camp; epitomized and personated by a gentleman, a merchant, a courtier, and a soldier.

Sol. I'll be your soldier. Am not I one? ha? [260

Cou. And am not I a fashionable courtier?

Poet. But who the citizen or merchant?

Spr. I.

Vin. And I your country gentleman.

Hil. Or I.

Poet. Yet to our moral I must add two persons, Divinity and Law. [269

La. Why, la you now! And am not I a lawyer?

Poet. But where's Divinity?

Vin. Marry, that I know not. One of us might do that, if either knew how to handle it.

Spr. Where's the old Patrico, our priest, my ghostly father? He'll do it rarely.

1 Beg. He was telling fortunes e'en now to country wenches. I'll fetch him. [*Exit.*

Spr. That Patrico I wonder at: he has told me strange things in clouds. [281

Am. And me somewhat that I may tell you hereafter.

Spr. That you shall be my bride?

Am. I will not tell you now.

Vin. Well, but what must our speeches tend to? what must we do one with another?

Poet. I would have the Country, the [289 City, and the Court be at great variance for superiority. Then would I have Divinity and Law stretch their wide throats to appease and reconcile them; then would I have the soldier cudgel them all together, and overtop them all. Stay, yet I want another person.

Hil. What must he be?

Poet. A beggar.

Vin. Here's enough of us, I think. What must the beggar do? [300

Poet. He must, at last, overcome the soldier; and bring them all to Beggars'-Hall. And this, well acted, will be for the honor of our calling.

All. A Scribble! A Scribble!

Hil. Come, where's this Patrico, that we may begin?

Enter PATRICO.

PAT. Alack and welladay!
This is no time to play:
Our quarter is beset;
We are all in the net.
Leave off your merry glee.

VIN. You begin scurvily.

SPR. Why, what's the matter?

BEGGARS, *within*. Bing awast, bing awast. The queer cove and the harman-beck. [*Some* BEGGARS *run across the stage.*

SPR. We are beset, indeed. What shall we do?

VIN. <I hope we shall be taken.

HIL. If the good hour be come, welcome by the grace of good fortune!>

Enter SENTWELL, CONSTABLE, *and the* WATCH. *The crew slip away.*

SENT. Beset the quarter round: be sure that none escape.

SPR. Lord to come with you, blessed master, to a many distressed—

VIN. AND HIL. Duly and truly pray for you.

RA. AND MER. Good your good worship, duly and truly, *etc.*

SENT. A many counterfeit rogues! So frolic and so lamentable all in a breath? You were acting a play but now: we'll act with you. Incorrigible vagabonds!

SPR. Good master, 'tis a holiday with us: an heir was married here to-day.

SENT. Married! Not so, I hope. Where is she? 'tis for an heir we seek.

SPR. Here she is, master. <Hide yourselves in the straw, the straw. Quickly, into the straw.> [*The three girls slip into the barn.*

SENT. What tell'st thou me of this? An old blind beggar-woman! We must find a young gentlewoman-heir among you. Where's all the rest of the crew?

CON. Slipped into the barn and the bushes by; but none can scape.

SENT. Look you to that and to these here. [*Exit, with* WATCH. *The girls come forth again.*

SPR. Into the straw, I say.

VIN. No, good Springlove. The ladies and we are agreed now to draw stakes and play this lousy game no further.

HIL. We will be taken, and disclose ourselves. You see, we shall be forced to it else. The cowardly clerk has done't, to save himself.

SPR. Do you fear no shame, ladies?

RA. Dost think it a shame to leave begging?

MER. Or that our father will turn us out to it again?

SPR. Nay, since you are so resolute, know that I myself begin to find this is no course for gentlemen. This lady shall take me off it.

AM. Make but your protestations good, and take me yours. And, for the gentleman that surprises us, though he has all my uncle's trust, he shall do anything for me to our advantage.

VIN. If, Springlove, thou couldst post now to thy tiring-house, and fetch all our clothes, we might get off most neatly.

SPR. A horse and six hours' travel would do that.

AM. You shall be furnished, doubt not.

Enter SENTWELL *and* WATCH.

SENT. She's scaped or is invisible.—You, sir, I take to be the chief rogue of this regiment: let him be whipped till he brings forth the heir.

CON. That is but till he stinks, sir.—Come, sir, strip, strip.

AM. Unhand him, sir.—What heir do you seek, Master Sentwell?

SENT. Precious, how did my haste oversee her? O Mistress Amie! Could I or your uncle, Justice Clack, a wiser man than I, ever ha' thought to have found you in such company?

AM. Of me, sir, and my company I have a story to delight you, which on our march towards your house I will relate to you.

SENT. And thither will I lead you as my guest;
But to the law surrender all the rest.
I'll make your peace.

AM. We must fare all alike. [*Exeunt.*

ACT FIVE

Scene I

Martin, *having returned to* Justice Clack's *house to give news of* Amie, *has been forgiven by the* Justice.

Cla. I have forgiven you, provided that my niece be safely taken, and so to be brought home safely, I say; that is to say, unstained, unblemished, undishonored; that is to say, with no more faults, criminal or accusative, than those she carried with her. [10

Mar. Sir, I believe—

Cla. Nay, if we both speak together, how shall we hear one another? you believe her virtue is armor of proof, without your counsel or your guard; and therefore you left her in the hands of rogues and vagabonds, to make your own peace with me. You have it; provided, I say (as I said before), that she be safe; that is to say, uncorrupted, undefiled; that is to say—as I said before. [21

Mar. Mine intent, sir, and my only way—

Cla. Nay, if we both speak together, how shall we hear one another, as I said before? Your intent and your only way, you would ha' said, was to run away with her, and that by her only instigation, to avoid the tie of marriage with Master Talboy; that is to say, to shun [30 the match that I had made for her; that is to say, rather to disobey me than to displease herself; wherein, although she did not altogether transgress the law, she did both offend and prejudice me, an instrument—nay, I may say, a pillar thereof. And you, in assisting her, furthering, and conveying her away, did not only infringe the law, in an unlawful departure from your master, but in a higher [40 point; that is to say, top and top-gallows high. I would ha' found a jury should ha' found it so.

Mar. But, sir, an't please you—

Cla. Must we then both speak together? Have I not borne with thee, to speak all thou pleasest in thy defence? Have I not broke mine own rule, which is, to punish before I examine; and so to have the law the surer o' my side? [50 And dost thou still persist? Hold your own peace; or, as I am a Justice of the King's, I will unsay what I said before, and set a *currat lex* at you, sirrah, that shall course you up the heavy hill. Oh, is your tongue fallen into your leg now? Do not you know I have acquitted you? provided, as I said before—Go your way in, and see that the gentlemen, who, I think, were got in sack, christened in [60 sack, nursed with sack, and fed up to gray hairs with only sack; see, I say, that they want no sack. My son Oliver (I thank him) has brought me a pair of such guests. [*Exit* Martin.

A moment later, enter Sentwell.

O, Master Sentwell! Good news?

Sent. Of beggarly news, the best you have heard. [69

Cla. That is to say, you have found my niece among the beggars. That is to say—

Sent. True, sir Oliver, I found her—

Cla. Now, if we both speak together, who shall hear one another?

Sent. I thought your desire was to be informed—

Cla. I can inform myself, sir, by your looks. I have taken a hundred examinations, i' my days, of felons and other [80 offenders, out of their very countenances, and wrote 'em down verbatim, to what they would have said. I am sure it has served to hang some of 'em and whip the rest.

Sent. <Justice Clack still! He must talk all. His clack must only go.>

Cla. But to the point. You have left her at your own house, not only to shift her out of her disguise, but out of her [90 shame, to come nearer me, until I send her pardon.

Sent. Most true, sir. But the company she was in—

Cla. Again! Do not I know the company? Beggars, rogues, vagabonds, and hedge-birds.

Sent. But do you know whom, or how

many we have taken? and how the rest escaped? [100

Cla. A needless knowledge. Why should we take more than herself? Or how could you take those that could escape?

Enter Martin.

Mar. Sir, the old gentlemen within sent me to wait upon you. Without you (they say) they need not my service.

Cla. Tell 'em then I'll wait on 'em presently. [*Exit* Martin. [110

Sent. But, sir, we have taken with her such beggars, such rogues, such vagabonds, and such hedge-birds (since you call 'em so) as you never knew or heard of, though now the country swarms with 'em under every hedge, as if an innumerable army of 'em were lately disbanded without pay. "Hedge-birds," said you? Hedge-lady-birds, hedge-cavaliers, hedge-soldier, hedge-lawyer, hedge-fiddlers, [120 hedge-poet, hedge-players, and a hedge-priest among 'em. Such we have taken for the principals. But to see how the multitude scaped us was more sport than pity. How, upon a watchword given, they in the instant vanished by more several ways than there were legs among 'em; how the cripples leaped over pales and hedges; how the blind found their way through lakes and ditches; how a [130 doxy flew, with two children at her back, and two more, perhaps, in her belly—

Cla. A hedge priest have you taken, say you?

Sent. Yes, sir, an old Patrico, an ancient prophet, to tell fortunes and cozen our poor country people of their single money.

Enter Oliver. [139

Ol. Sir, Master Oldrents, in that he enjoys not your company, begins to doubt of his welcome.

Cla. Who led him into that doubt? I, or you that brought him hither?

Ol. Sir, his own desire and love to you brought him hither; I but showed him the way.

Cla. You reason fairly. Tell him I come.

Ol. Pray, sir, be pleased to do so: for he says— [151

Cla. Nay, if we both talk together—

Ol. Who shall hear one another?

[*Exit* Oliver.

Cla. But are there players among the apprehended?

Sent. Yes, sir, and they were contriving to act a play among themselves, just as we surprised 'em and spoiled their sport. [160

Cla. Players! I'll pay them above all the rest.

Sent. You shall do well in that; to put 'em in stock to set up again.

Cla. Yes, I'll put 'em in stocks, and set 'em up to the whipping post. They can act justices, can they! I'll act a justice among 'em; that is to say, I will do justice upon them; that is to say—

Sent. Pray, sir, be not severe; they [170 act kings and emperors, as well as justices. And Justice is blind, they say; you may therefore be pleased to wink a little. I find that you have merry old gentlemen in your house, that are come far to visit you. I'll undertake that these players, with the help of their poet, in a device which they have already studied, and a pack of clothes which I shall supply 'em with, shall give your guests much [180 content and move compassion in you towards the poor strollers.

Cla. But you know my way of justice (and that's a sure way) is to punish 'em first and be compassionate afterwards, as I find 'em upon their examination.

Sent. But, for your guests' sakes, who (I know) do favor and affect the quality of actors very much, permit 'em, sir: it will enlarge your entertainment exceedingly. [191

Cla. And perhaps save me the expense of a runlet of sack the while. Well, sir, for that respect, and upon your undertaking that they shall please, I will prorogue my justice on the rogues. And so to my merry gentlemen, whom I will prepare to see their interlude, against after sup-

per. But pray, Master Sentwell, as you have found my niece, look to her, and see her decently brought home. [201

Sent. In her own best apparel; but you must prorogue your displeasure to her too.

Cla. I will do so, until my scarce-welcome guests be gone.

Enter Randal.

Ran. Sir, my master sends you word, and plainly, that without your company your entertainment stinks. He has [210 commanded me saddle his nags, and away to-night. If you come not at once, twice, thrice, he's gone presently, before supper: he'll find an host at an inn worth an hundred o' you.

Cla. Good friend, I will now satisfy your master, without telling him he has a saucy knave to his man.

Ran. Thank your worship. [*Exit* Clack. [220

Sent. Do you hear, friend? you serve Master Oldrents.

Ran. I could ha' told you that; and the best house-keeper my master is of any gentleman in the county he dwells in; and the best master to a man, as I, the worst of twenty, can say for him, and would be ashamed to say less.

Sent. Your name is Randal. [229

Ran. Forgi' me! Are you so wise? you are too young to be my godsire, and I hope not old enough to be a witch. How know you that I am Randal? were you ever at my master's house i' Nottinghamshire, or at Dunghillford, where I was born?

Sent. No. But I have notes to know you by.

Ran. I was never twelve miles from thence i' my life, before this journey. [240 God send me within ken of our own kitchen smoke again!

Sent. Your master's steward's name is Springlove.

Ran. Master Springlove, an't please you. There is not an honester gentleman between this and the head of him; and my heart's with him, where'er he is. Know you him too? [249

Sent. Yes, and your master's daughters too.

Ran. Whaw!

Sent. And that they are all from home, your master knows not where.

Ran. Whaw, whaw! Know you that too?

Sent. Yes, and the two young gentlemen that are with them, Master Vincent and Master Hilliard. [259

Ran. Whaw, whaw again! You know 'em all, I think. But know you where they all are?

Sent. Even here by, at my own house.

Ran. Whaw!

Sent. And they, knowing that your master is here, and Master Hearty too—

Ran. Whaw, whaw!

Sent. And yourself too: they directed me to find you, Randal, and bring you to 'em. [270

Ran. Whaw, whaw, whaw, whaw! Why do we not go then?

Sent. But secretly. Not a word to anybody.

Ran. Mum! Will you go then?

Enter Martin.

Mar. O, Master Oldrents' man! Pray let me entreat you into the buttery.

Ran. Will you go, master gentleman?

Mar. Indeed it is my master's desire, and he commanded me. [281

Ran. Now, when it's supper time, did he! to fill my belly with thin drink, to save his meat? It's the manner in churls' houses. Will you go, master gentleman?

Mar. In troth, my master is so merry with yours within.

Ran. Shite o' your master: my master's steward's a better man. I'll to [290 him, at this gentleman's house, and all the rest. Whaw, whaw!

Sent. Randal, you forget.

Ran. Mum again then! Why would you not go then? [*Exeunt* Sentwell *and* Randal.

Mar. The man's as mad as his mas-

ter—the strangest strangers that ever came to our house.

Enter TALBOY. [300

TAL. Well, Martin, for confessing thy fault and the means thou mad'st whereby she is taken, I am friends with thee; but I shall never look upon her, or thee, but with grief of mind, however I bear it outwardly. Oh!

MAR. You bear it very manfully, methinks.

TAL. Ay, you think so, and I know so; but what I feel I feel. Would one of us two had never both seen one another!—Oh! [312

MAR. You speak very good sense, sir. But does my master continue his merry humor with the old gentlemen within?

TAL. Yes. Justice Clack's clack goes as merrily as any.

MAR. Well said, sir! Now, you speak merrily too; but I could say somewhat that would still him; and, for your comfort, I'll tell you: Mistress Amie is fallen in love with one of the beggars. [322

TAL. Then have I nothing else to do but to laugh at thee as long as I live. Ha, ha, ha! To let a beggar cozen thee of her! Ha, ha, ha! A beggar! I shall die merrily yet. Ha, ha, ha!

Enter CLACK, OLDRENTS, HEARTY, *and* OLIVER.

CLA. A hay, boys, a hay! This is right; that is to say, as I would have it; that is to say— [332

TAL. A beggar! Ha, ha, ha!

MAR. Ha, ha, ha!

CLA. A hay, boys, a hay! They are as merry without as we were within. A hay, Master Oldrents, and Master Hearty! The virtue of your company turns all to mirth and melody, with a hay trololly lolly lolly. Is't not so, [340 Master Hearty?

OLD. Why, thus it should be! How was I deceived! Now I see you are a good fellow.

OL. <He was never so before. If it be a lightning before death, the best is, I am his heir.>

TAL. AND MAR. Ha, ha, ha!

CLA. Again, boys, again! that is to say, a hay, boys, a hay! [350

HEA. What is the motive of your mirth, nephew Martin? Let us laugh with you.

OLD. Was that spoke like my friend Hearty? Lack we motives to laugh? Are not all things, anything, everything to be laughed at? And, if nothing were to be seen, felt, heard, or understood, we would laugh at it too.

CLA. You take the loss of your mistress merrily, Master Talboy. [360

TAL. More merrily than you will take the finding of her. Ha, ha, ha!—A beggar! Ha, ha, ha!

CLA. Can I be sad to find her, think you?

MAR. He thinks you will be displeased with her and chide her.

CLA. You are deceived, Master Talboy; you are wide, Master Talboy; above half your length, Master Talboy. Law [370 and Justice shall sleep, and mirth and good fellowship ride a circuit here to-night. A hay, Master Oldrents! a hay, Master Hearty! and a hay, son Oliver! and a hay, nephew Talboy! and a hay, my clerk Martin! and a hay for the players! When come they? Son Oliver, see for Master Sentwell, that is no readier with his new company. [379

TAL. Players! Let's go see too. I never saw any players. [*Exeunt* TALBOY *and* MARTIN.

OL. <This is the first fit that ever he had of this disease; and, if it be his last, I say, as I said before, I am his heir.> [*Exit.*

OLD. But is there a play to be expected, and acted by beggars? [388

CLA. That is to say, by vagabonds; that is to say, by strolling players. They are upon their purgation: if they can present anything to please you, they may escape the law; that is—a hay! If not, to-morrow, gentlemen, shall be acted abuses stripped and whipped among 'em; with a hay, Master Hearty! you are not merry.

Enter SENTWELL. [398

And a hay, Master Sentwell! where are your *Dramatis Personæ;* your *Prologus,* and your *Actus Primus,* ha? Ha' they given you the slip, for fear of the whip? A hay!

SENT. A word aside, an't please you. [SENTWELL *takes* CLACK *aside, and gives him a paper.*

OLD. I have not known a man in such a humor.

HEA. And of his own finding! He stole it, indeed, out of his own bottles, [410 rather than be robbed of his liquor: misers use to tipple themselves so.

OLD. He does so outdo us that we look like staid men again, Hearty, fine sober things.

HEA. But how long will it last? He'll hang himself to-morrow for the cost we have put him to.

OLD. I love a miser's feast dearly. To see how thin and scattering the dishes stood, as if they feared quarrelling! [421

HEA. And how the bottles, to scape breaking one another, were brought up by one at once!

OLD. How one of the serving men, untrained to wait, spilt the white broth!

HEA. And another, stumbling at the threshold, tumbled in his dish of rouncevals [1] before him.

OLD. And, most suitable to the nig- [430 gardliness of his feast, we shall now have an entertainment, or play, presented by beggars.

CLA. Send 'em in, Master Sentwell. [*Exit* SENTWELL.] Sit, gentlemen, the players are ready to enter; and here's a bill of their plays: you may take your choice.

OLD. Are they ready for them all in the same clothes? Read 'em, good Hearty. [440

HEA. First, here's "The Two Lost Daughters."

OLD. Put me not in mind of the two lost daughters, I prethee. What's the next?

HEA. "The Vagrant Steward."

OLD. Nor of a vagrant steward. <Sure some abuse is meant me.>

HEA. "The Old Squire and the Fortune-teller." [450

OLD. That comes nearer me. Away with it.

HEA. "The Beggar's Prophecy."

OLD. All these titles may serve to one play, of a story that I know too well. I'll see none of them.

HEA. Then here's "The Merry Beggars."

OLD. Ay, that; and let 'em begin.

Enter TALBOY *and* OLIVER. [460

TAL. The players are coming in; and Mistress Amie and your man Martin are to be actors among 'em.

CLA. A hay then for that too! Some merry device sure. [*A flourish of shawms.*] Hark! the beggars' hautboys. Now they begin.

OLD. See, a most solemn Prologue.

Enter POET *for Prologue.* [469

POET. *To knight, to squire, and to the gentiles here,*
We wish our play may with content appear.
We promise you no dainty wit of court,
Nor city pageantry, nor country sport:
But a plain piece of action, short and sweet,
In story true. You'll know it when you see't. [479

OLD. True stories and true jests do seldom thrive on stages.

CLA. They are best to please you with this though, or a hay with a whip for them to-morrow!

OLD. Nay, rather than they shall suffer, I will be pleased, let 'em play their worst. [*A flourish.*

Enter PATRICO, *with* LAWYER *habited like* OLDRENTS.

See our Patrico among 'em. [490

HEA. That offered you a doxy in the barn.

PAT. *Your children's fortunes I have told,*

[1] peas.

That they shall beg ere they be old;
And will you have a reason why?
'Tis justice in their destiny.

CLA. <Justice, ha! Are you meddling with justices already?>

PAT. *Your grandfather, by crafty wile*
Of bargaining, did much beguile
A thriftless heir of half the lands
That are descended to your hands,
And, then, by law, not equity,
Forced him and his posterity
To woe and shameful beggary.

LAW. *That was no fault of mine, nor of my children.*

PAT. *But our forefathers' debts and crimes,*
Although forborne till future times,
Are not so paid; but what needs more?
I wish you happy in your store. [Exit.

OLD. <Dost note this, Hearty?

HEA. You said you would be pleased, let 'em play their worst.> [*The* LAWYER *walks about sadly, beats his breast, etc. To him enters the* SOLDIER *dressed like* HEARTY, *and seems to comfort him.*

OLD. <It begins my story, and by the same fortune-teller that told me my daughters' fortunes; almost in the same words. I know him now; and he speaks in the play to one that personates me, as near as they can set him forth.>

CLA. How like you it, sir? You seem displeased. Shall they be whipped yet? A hay, if you say the word!

OLD. O, by no means, sir; I am pleased.

SOL. *Sad for the words of a base fortune teller?*
Believe him? Hang him! I'll trust none of 'em.
They have all whims, and double double meanings
In all they say.

OLD. Whom does he talk or look like, now?

HEA. It is no matter whom. You are pleased, you say.

SOL. *Ha' you no sack i' th' house? am not I here?*
And never without a merry old song?
[Singing.]
Old sack and old songs, and a merry old crew,
Will fright away cares, when the ground looks blue.

And can you think on gypsy fortune-tellers?

LAW. *I'll think as little of 'em as I can.*

SOL. *Will you abroad then? But here comes your steward.*

Enter SPRINGLOVE.

OLD. <Bless me! Is not that Springlove?

HEA. Is that you that talks to him, or that coxcomb I, do you think? Pray, let 'em play their play: the justice will not hinder 'em, you see; he's asleep.>

SPR. *Here are the keys of all my charge, sir; and my humble suit is, that you will be pleased to let me walk upon my known occasions, this summer.*

LAW. *Fie! Canst not yet leave off those vagrancies?*
But I will strive no more to alter nature!
I will not hinder thee, nor bid thee go.

OLD. <My own very words at his departure.

HEA. No matter! Pray attend.>

LAW. *Come, friend, I'll take your counsel.* [Exeunt LAWYER and SOLDIER.

SPR. *I've striven with myself to alter nature in me,*
For my good master's sake, but all in vain;
For beggars, cuckoo-like, fly out again,
In their own notes and seasons.

Enter RACHEL, MERIEL, VINCENT, and HILLIARD.

RA. *Our father's sadness will not suffer us*
To live in's house.

MER. *And we must have a progress.*

VIN. *Th' assurance of your* [*dear*] *loves hath engaged us.*

HIL. *To wait on you in any course.*

RA. *Suppose we'll go a-begging.*

VIN. AND HIL. *We are for you.*

SPR. *And that must be your course, and suddenly,*

To cure your father's sadness, who is told
It is your destiny; which you may quit
By making it a trick of youth and wit.
I'll set you in the way.

ALL FOUR. *But how? But how?* [All talk aside.

OLD. <My daughters and their sweethearts too! I see [600
The scope of their design, and the whole drift
Of all their action now, with joy and comfort.

HEA. But take no notice yet. See a whim more of it.
But the mad rogue that acted me I must make drunk anon.>

SPR. *Now! are you all resolved?* [609

ALL FOUR. *Agreed, agreed!*

SPR. *You beg, to absolve your fortune, not for need.* [Exeunt.

OLD. <I must commend their act in that. Prethee, let's call 'em and end the matter here. The purpose of their play is but to work my friendship or their peace with me; and they have it.

HEA. But see a little more, sir.

Enter RANDAL.

OLD. My man Randal too! Has [620 he a part with 'em?>

RAN. *They were well set a work, when they made me a player. What is that I must say? And how must I act now? Oh! That I must be steward for the beggars in master steward's absence; and tell my master he's gone to measure land for him to purchase.*

OLD. You, sir. Leave the work you can do no better—I can forbear no longer—and call the actors back again to me. [631

RAN. With all my heart; and glad my part is so soon done! [*Exit.*

Enter PATRICO.

PAT. Since you will then break off our play,
Something in earnest I must say;
But let affected rhyming go:
I'll be no more a patrico.
My name is Wrought-on. Start not; but (if you [641
Desire to hear what's worth your best attention,
More privately) you may draw nearer me. [OLDRENTS *goes to him.*

HEA. Hear no more fortunes.

OLD. You shall give me leave.

PAT. I am grandson to that unhappy Wrought-on
Whom your grandfather craftily wrought out [651
Of his estate. By which, all his posterity
Were, since, exposed to beggary. I do not charge
You with the least offence in this. But, now,
Come nearer me; for I must whisper to you. [PATRICO *takes* OLDRENTS *aside.*

<I had a sister, who among the race [660
Of beggars was the fairest. Fair she was
In gentle blood, and gesture to her beauty,
Which could not be so clouded with base clothing
But she attracted love from worthy persons,
Which (for her meanness) they expressed in pity [669
For the most part; but some assaulted her
With amorous, though loose, desires, which she
Had virtue to withstand. Only one gentleman
(Whether it were by her affection or
His fate to send his blood a-begging with her
I question not) by her, in heat of youth,
Did get a son, who now must call you father. [681

OLD. Me?

PAT. You. Attend me, sir: your bounty, then,
Disposed your purse to her; in which, besides
Much money (I conceive by your neglect)
Was thrown this holy relique. Do you know it? [*Produces emblem.* [690

OLD. The Agnus Dei that my mother gave me

Upon her death-bed! O, the loss of it
Was my sore grief: and now, with joy, it is
Restored by miracle! Does your sister live?

PAT. No, sir. She died within a few days after [699

Her son was born, and left him to my care;
On whom, I, to this day, have had an eye,
In all his wand'rings.

OLD. Then the young man lives! >

Enter SPRINGLOVE, VINCENT, HILLIARD, RACHEL, *and* MERIEL.

PAT. Here, with the rest of your fair children, sir.

OLD. My joy begins to be too great within me: [710

My blessing, and a welcome to you all!
Be one another's, and you all are mine.

VIN. AND HIL. We are agreed on that.

RA. Long since:
We only stood till you shook off your sadness.

MER. For which we were fain to go a-begging, sir.

OLD. Now I can read the justice of my fate, and yours— [720

CLA. <Ha! Justice? Are they handling of justice?>

OLD. But more applaud great providence in both.

CLA. Are they jeering of justices? I watched for that.

HEA. Ay, so methought. No, sir: the play is done.

Enter SENTWELL, AMIE, OLIVER, *and* MARTIN. [730

SENT. See, sir, your niece presented to you. [SPRINGLOVE *takes* AMIE.

CLA. What, with a speech by one of the players?
Speak, sir: and be not daunted: I am favorable.

SPR. Then, by your favor, sir, this maiden is my wife.

CLA. Sure, you are out o' your part: that is to say, you must begin again. [740

SPR. She's mine by solemn contract, sir.

CLA. You will not tell me that.—Are not you my niece?

AM. I dare not, sir, deny't: we are contracted.

CLA. Nay, if we both speak together, how shall we hear one another?

MAR. I must disprove the contract.

TAL. That is my part to speak. [749

SENT. None can disprove it: I am witness to it.

CLA. Nay, if we all speak, as I said before—

OLD. Hear me for all, then. Here are no beggars (you are but one, Patrico), no rogues, nor players; but a select company, to fill this house with mirth. These are my daughters; these, their husbands; and this, that shall marry your niece, a gentleman, my son. I will instantly [760 estate him in a thousand pound a year to entertain his wife, and to their heirs forever. Do you hear me now?

CLA. Now I do hear you; and I must hear you. That is to say, it is a match; that is to say, as I said before—

TAL. And must I hear it too? O!

OLD. Yes, though you whine your eyes out. [769

HEA. Nephew Martin, still the child with a suck-bottle of sack! Peace, lamb; and I'll find a wife for thee.

OLD. Now, Patrico, if you can quit your function,
To live a moderate gentleman, I'll give you
A competent annuity for your life.

PAT. I'll be, withal, your faithful beadsman; and spend my whole life in prayers for you and yours. [780

CLA. And now, clerk Martin, give all the beggars my free pass, without all manner of correction; that is to say, with a hay, get 'em gone!

OL. Are not you the gentleman that challenged me in right of your friend here?

VIN. Your inspection's good, sir.

RA. And you the gentleman (I take it) that would have made beggar-sport with us, two at once. [791

Mer. For twelve pence apiece, sir.
Ol. I hope we all are friends.
Spr. Now, on my duty, sir, I'll beg no more,
But your continual love, and daily blessing.
Old. Except it be at court, boy; where if ever I come, it shall be to beg the next Fool-royal's place that falls.
Spr. A begging epilogue yet would not be,
Methinks, improper to this comedy.

EPILOGUE

Though we are, now, no beggars of the crew,
We count it not a shame to beg of you.
The justice, here, has given his pass free
To all the rest, unpunished; only we
Are under censure, till we do obtain
Your suffrages, that we may beg again;
And often, in the course we took to-day,
Which was intended, for your mirth, a play,
Not without action and a little wit,
Therefore we beg your pass for us and it.

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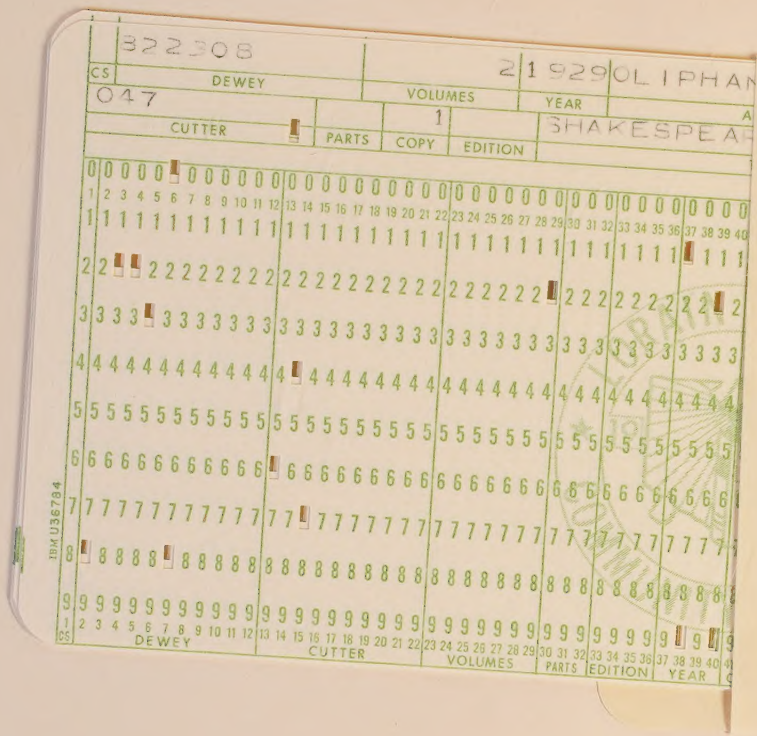
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LORAIN COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE LIBRARY
3 6505 00006 7658